

THE DIAL



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THE POSSIBILITY OF A POETIC DRAMA

BY T. S. ELIOT

THE questions—why there is no poetic drama to-day, how the stage has lost all hold on literary art, why so many poetic plays are written which can only be read, and read, if at all, without pleasure—have become insipid, almost academic. The usual conclusion is either that “conditions” are too much for us, or that we really prefer other types of literature, or simply that we are uninspired. As for the last alternative, it is not to be entertained; as for the second, what type do we prefer? and as for the first, no one has ever shown me “conditions” except of the most superficial. The reasons for raising the question again are first that the majority, perhaps, certainly a large number, of poets hanker for the stage; and second, that a not negligible public appears to want verse plays. Surely here is some legitimate craving, not restricted to a few persons, which only the verse play can satisfy. And surely the critical attitude is to attempt to analyse the conditions and the other data. If there comes to light some conclusive obstacle, the investigation should at least help us to turn our thoughts to more profitable pursuits; and if there is not we may hope to arrive eventually at a statement of conditions which might be altered. Possibly we shall find that our incapacity has a deeper source: the arts have flourished at times when there was no drama; possibly we are incompetent altogether; in that case the stage will be not the seat, but at all events a symptom, of the malady.

From the point of view of literature, the drama is only one among several poetic forms. The epic, the ballad, the *chanson de geste*, the forms of Provence and of Tuscany, all found their perfection by

serving particular societies. The forms of Ovid, Catullus, Propertius, served a society different, and in some respects more civilized, than any of these; and in the society of Ovid the drama as a form of art was comparatively insignificant. Nevertheless, the drama is perhaps the most permanent, is capable of greater variation and of expressing more varied types of society, than any other. It varied considerably in England alone; but when one day it was discovered lifeless, subsequent forms which had enjoyed a transitory life were already dead too. I am not prepared to undertake the historical survey; but I should say that the poetic drama's autopsy was performed as much by Charles Lamb as by any one else. For a form is not wholly dead until it is known to be; and Lamb, by exhuming the remains of dramatic life at its fullest, brought a consciousness of the immense gap between present and past. It was impossible to believe, after that, in a dramatic "tradition." The relation of Byron's English Bards and the poems of Crabbe to the work of Pope was a continuous tradition; but the relation of *The Cenci* to the great English drama is almost that of a reconstruction to an original. By losing tradition, we lose our hold on the present; but so far as there was any dramatic tradition in Shelley's day there was nothing worth the keeping. There is all the difference between preservation and restoration.

The Elizabethan age in England was able to absorb a great quantity of new thoughts and new images, almost dispensing with tradition, because it had this great form of its own which imposed itself on everything that came to it. Consequently, the blank verse of its plays accomplished a subtlety and consciousness, even an intellectual power, that no blank verse has developed or even repeated; elsewhere this Age is crude, pedantic, or loutish in comparison with its contemporary France or Italy. The nineteenth century had a good many fresh impressions too; but it had no form in which to confine them. Browning and perhaps Wordsworth hammered out forms for themselves—personal forms, *The Excursion*, *Sordello*, *The Ring and the Book*, *Dramatic Monologues*; but no man can invent a form, create a taste for it, and perfect it too. Tennyson, who might unquestionably have been a consummate master of minor forms, took to turning out large patterns on a machine. As for Keats and Shelley, they were too young to be judged, and they were trying one form after another.

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These poets were certainly obliged to consume energy in a pursuit of form which could never lead to a wholly satisfying result. There has only been one Dante; and after all Dante had the benefit of years of practice in forms employed and altered by numbers of contemporaries and predecessors; he did not waste the years of youth in metric invention; and when he came to the *Commedia* he knew how to pillage right and left. To have, given into one's hands, a crude form, capable of indefinite refinement, and to be the person to see the possibilities—Shakespeare was very fortunate. And it is perhaps the craving for some such *donnée* which draws us on toward the present mirage of poetic drama.

But it is now very questionable whether there are more than two or three in the present generation who are *capable*, the least bit capable, of benefiting by such advantages were they given. At most two or three actually devote themselves to this pursuit of form for which they have little or no public recognition. To create a form is not merely to invent a shape, a rhyme, or rhythm. It is also the realization of the whole appropriate content of this rhyme or rhythm. The sonnet of Shakespeare is not merely such and such a pattern, but a precise way of thinking and feeling. The framework which was provided for the Elizabethan dramatist was not merely blank verse and the five act play and the Elizabethan playhouse; it was not merely the plot—for the poets incorporated, remodelled, adapted, or invented as occasion suggested. It was also the half-formed *ύμη*, the "temper of the age" (an unsatisfactory phrase), a preparedness, a habit on the part of the public, to respond to particular stimuli. There is a book to be written on the commonplaces of any great dramatic period, the handling of Fate or Death, the recurrence of mood, tone, situation. We should see then just how little each poet had to do; only so much as would make a play his, only what was really essential to make it different from any one's else. When there is this economy of effort it is possible to have several, even many, good poets at once. The great ages did not perhaps produce much more talent than ours; but less talent was wasted.

Now in a formless age there is very little hope for the minor poet to do anything worth doing; and when I say minor I mean very good poets indeed: such as filled the Greek anthology and the Elizabethan songbooks; even a Herrick; but not merely second-

rate poets, for Denham and Waller have quite another importance, occupying points in the development of a major form. When everything is set out for the minor poet to do, he may quite frequently come upon some *trouvaille*, even in the drama: Peele and Brome are examples. Under the present conditions, the minor poet has too much to do. And this leads to another reason for the incompetence of our time in poetic drama.

Permanent literature is always a presentation: either a presentation of thought, or a presentation of feeling by a statement of events in human action or objects in the external world. In earlier literature—to avoid the word “classic”—we find both kinds, and sometimes, as in some of the dialogues of Plato, exquisite combinations of both. Aristotle presents thought, stripped to the essential structure, and he is a great writer. The Agamemnon, or Macbeth is equally a statement, but of events. They are as much works of the “intellect” as the writings of Aristotle. There are more recent works of art which have the same quality of intellect in common with those of Aeschylus and Shakespeare and Aristotle: Education Sentimentale is one of them. Compare it with such a book as Vanity Fair and you will see that the labour of the intellect consisted largely in a purification, in keeping out a great deal that Thackeray allowed to remain in; in refraining from reflection, putting into the statement enough to make reflection unnecessary. The case of Plato is still more illuminating. Take the Theaetetus. In a few opening words Plato gives a scene, a personality, a feeling, which colour the subsequent discourse but do not interfere with it: the particular setting, and the abstruse theory of knowledge afterwards developed, co-operate without confusion. Could any contemporary author exhibit such control?

In the nineteenth century another mentality manifested itself. It is evident in a very able and brilliant poem, Goethe's Faust. Marlowe's Mephistopheles is a simpler creature than Goethe's. But at least Marlowe has in a few words concentratd him into a statement. He is there, and (incidentally) he renders Milton's Satan superfluous. Goethe's demon inevitably sends us back to Goethe. He embodies a philosophy. A creation of art should not do that: he should replace the philosophy. Goethe has not, that is to say, sacrificed or consecrated his thought to make the drama; the drama is still a means. And this type of mixed art has been repeated by

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men incomparably smaller than Goethe. We have had one other remarkable work of this type: Peer Gynt. And we have had the plays of M. Maeterlinck and M. Claudel. (I should except the Dynasts. This gigantic panorama is hardly to be called a success, but it is essentially an attempt to present a vision and "sacrifices" the philosophy to the vision as all great dramas do. Mr Hardy has apprehended his matter as a poet and an artist.)

In the work of Maeterlinck and Claudel on the one hand, and that of M. Bergson on the other, we have the mixture of the *genres* in which our age delights. Every work of imagination must have a philosophy; and every philosophy must be a work of art—how often have we heard that M. Bergson is an artist! It is a boast of his disciples. It is what the word "art" means to them that is the disputable point. Certain works of philosophy can be called works of art: much of Aristotle and Plato, Spinoza, parts of Hume, Mr Bradley's Principles of Logic, Mr Russell's essay on Denoting: clear and beautifully formed thought. But this is not what the admirers of Bergson, Claudel, or Maeterlinck (the philosophy of the latter is a little out of date) mean. They mean precisely what is not clear, but what is an emotional stimulus. And as a mixture of thought and of vision provides more stimulus, by suggesting both, clear thinking and clear statement of particular objects must disappear.

The undigested "idea" or philosophy, the idea-emotion, is to be found also in poetic dramas which are conscientious attempts to adapt a true structure, Athenian or Elizabethan, to contemporary feeling. It appears sometimes as the attempt to supply the defect of structure by an internal emotional structure. "But most important of all is the structure of the incidents. For Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality." (Poetics: VI, 9. Butcher's translation.)

We have on the one hand the "poetic" drama, imitation Greek, imitation Elizabethan, or modern-philosophical, on the other the comedy of "ideas," from Shaw, to Galsworthy, down to the ordinary social comedy. The most ramshackle Guitry farce has some paltry idea or comment upon life put into the mouth of one of the characters at the end. It is said that the stage can be used for a variety of purposes, that in only one of them perhaps is it united

with literary art. A mute theatre is a possibility (I do not mean the cinema); the ballet is an actuality (though under-nourished); opera is an institution; but where you have "imitations of life" on the stage, with speech, the only standard that we can allow is the standard of the work of art, aiming at the same intensity at which poetry and the other forms of art aim. From that point of view the Shavian drama is a hybrid as the Maeterlinckian drama is, and we need express no surprise at their belonging to the same epoch. Both philosophies are popularizations: the moment an idea has been transferred from its pure state in order that it may become comprehensible to the inferior intelligence it has lost contact with art. It can remain pure only by being stated simply in the form of general truth, or by being transmuted, as the attitude of Flaubert toward the small bourgeois is transformed in *Education Sentimentale*. It has there become so identified with the reality that you can no longer say what the idea is.

The essential is not, of course, that drama should be written in verse, or that we should be able to extenuate our appreciation of broad farce by occasionally attending a performance of a play of Euripides where Professor Murray's translation is sold at the door. The essential is to get upon the stage this precise statement of life which is at the same time a point of view, a world; a world which the author's mind has subjected to a process of simplification. I do not find that any drama which "embodies a philosophy" of the author's (like *Faust*) or which illustrates any social theory (like Shaw's) can possibly fulfil the requirements—though a place might be left for Shaw if not for Goethe. And the world of Ibsen and the world of Chekhov are not enough simplified, universal.

Finally, we must take into account the instability of any art—the drama, music, dancing—which depends upon representation by performers. The intervention of performers introduces a complication of economic conditions which is in itself likely to be injurious. A struggle, more or less unconscious, between the creator and the interpreter is almost inevitable. The interest of a performer is almost certain to be centred in himself: a very slight acquaintance with actors and musicians will testify. The performer is interested not in form but in opportunities for virtuosity or in the communication of his "personality"; the formlessness, the lack of intellectual clarity and distinction in modern music, the great physical stamina

and physical training which it often requires, are perhaps signs of the triumph of the performer. The consummation of the triumph of the actor over the play is perhaps the productions of the Guitry.

The conflict is one which certainly can not be terminated by the utter rout of the actor profession. For one thing, the stage appeals to too many demands besides the demand for art, for that to be possible; and also we need, unfortunately, something more than refined automata. Occasionally attempts have been made to "get around" the actor, to envelop him in masks, to set up a few "conventions" for him to stumble over, or even to develop little breeds of actors for some special Art drama. This meddling with nature seldom succeeds; nature usually overcomes these obstacles. Possibly the majority of attempts to confect a poetic drama have begun at the wrong end; they have aimed at the small public which wants "poetry." ("Novices," says Aristotle, "in the art attain to finish of diction and precision of portraiture before they can construct the plot.") The Elizabethan drama was aimed at a public which wanted entertainment of a crude sort, but would stand a good deal of poetry; our problem should be to take a form of entertainment, and subject it to the process which would leave it a form of art. Perhaps the music hall comedian is the best material. I am aware that this is a dangerous suggestion to make. For every person who is likely to consider it seriously there are a dozen toy-makers who would leap to tickle aesthetic society into one more quiver and giggle of art debauch. Very few treat art seriously. There are those who treat it solemnly, and will continue to write poetic pastiches of Euripides and Shakespeare; and there are others who treat it as a joke.

HOW HÉLOÏSE PASSED THE WINTER OF 1117 WITH HER UNCLE, CANON FULBERT OF NOTRE DAME, AND HIS GOOD SERVANT, MADELON

BY GEORGE MOORE

AS they came down the stairs Madelon spoke of a wolf-hunt, saying that the hunters were waiting for the full moon to beguile the pack into the city. Madelon says there's going to be a wolf-hunt, the Canon said, throwing open the study door. From whom didst get the news? Héloïse asked. From whom indeed? Madelon replied. Why, all the town is talking of it; nor are there two in the town except your two selves who don't know of it. And as uncle and niece begged of her to remove their ignorance, she began to tell that the wolves had been in the streets lately after nightfall, picking up what they could get in the way of stray cats and dogs, and emboldened by hunger, for the snow was falling fast, they would soon come into the streets as they did in Brittany, for had she not seen a child eaten by an old grey wolf in her own village street? And lest the same disaster should fall out in Paris, as well it might if the wolves were not to be persecuted, the townsfolk were about to begin to rid themselves of the large pack that came down from the Orléans forest every night, a matter of fifty miles. But what is fifty miles, she said, to a wolf? Just no more than a little trot round to ourselves across the island from bridge to bridge. The squealing of a pig tied to a post by the Little Bridge will soon be heard, and the wolf that hears it will let off a howl to his comrades, a dozen or twenty, for no one knows the size of the pack, and these will soon be growling and fighting over piggy. Another will be tied within the island some yards behind the bridge, and he too will be eaten; and three nights from now, being full moon and the night almost as clear as day, a dozen wolves or more will be seeking for food beyond the bridge, and when they are well within the city the bridges will be held by spearmen. So let us pray for a fine night, for clear moonlight means the death of the pack.

It will be a clever wolf who will escape with his life. So said Madelon, and it was as if God had answered their prayers, for on the night of the full moon a blue stream of light shone right across the island, and a dozen wolves were hunted through it, shapely grey animals with bushy tails, pretty triangular ears and long jaws filled with strangely devised teeth, harmonizing in their variety; exquisite instruments of torture that would delight our executioner. Again and again the wolves escaped the spearmen in the street, but all the doors were closed against them and large dogs tracked them and drove them out of their hiding-places, and they were done to death in couples and singly, with spears and great beams of wood sharpened and hardened by fire, not dying, however, without a fight. But the wolf that stayed to bite was hewed down or pierced with a sword, till at last the remnant began to see that only by swimming the stream could they escape. Some five or six plunged in and swam valiantly, but archers were placed along the left and the right banks behind the poplar and the willow trees, and when a wolf reached the middle of the stream an arrow struck him; he went under, the current swilled him away, and from their high balcony Héloïse, the Canon, and Madelon watched the shooting from the right bank, seeing one grey, courageous animal reach the bank despite the mortal arrow. He is the last one, Héloïse said, but at these words a beautiful young wolf galloped down their street and, catching sight of Héloïse on the balcony, he laid himself down against the door, and howled for it to be opened to him; and she might have risked being bitten, but before there was time to ask for the Canon's consent some hunters appeared in the street and the young wolf was slain in a corner, a big beam being driven through him.

There's no better covering than a wolf-skin to wrap round the knees, said one of the hunters. But I can not sit reading with the skin of the animal about my knees that howled to me for help, Héloïse said. We thought, said the hunter, that the skin came to you by right, he that wore it being killed at your door; and as Héloïse would not buy the wolf, he was slung over the beam and carried away for other knees.

The news of the hunt in the streets and markets next morning was that eleven wolves had been killed. The twelfth had escaped,

and this was looked upon as part of the general good fortune, for he, so it was said, would tell his comrades of the danger of venturing into men's cities, especially those built on islands. It was hoped that the snow, which had begun to come down again, would not fetch further wolves out of their forests; it was hoped, too, that it would not be long upon the ground; a week was spoken of as likely, they being now in February. But almost while the folk were talking of the coming of spring, the blue sky darkened to a dun grey overhead; copper and sulphur it was along the horizon, betokening more snow. The wind rose and shrieked all night about the pointed towers and the peaked gables; and in the morning snow was falling thickly, large flakes more wonderful than any leaf or flower or shell, for nothing compares with the large, white friable snow that passes into a drop of water almost as soon as it falls into the hand that catches it. But in eleven hundred and seventeen it lay on the frozen ground, deepening every hour, day after day filling the roadway and the roofs, whitening the tops of the towers, bearing down the branches of the trees; a wonderful sight truly is a city seen through the white flutter, falling relentlessly, falling always, as if the sky sought to bury the world. Will the flakes never cease from falling? was the thought in everybody's mind, and looking out of their narrow windows, the folk saw little else but snow. It will snow all night, they said; and if it snows all to-morrow and the next night we shall not be able to open our doors. But at last the snow ceased to fall, and shovels were again heard clearing the streets, piling the snow up on either side of the roadway, the ditches rising to seven, eight, and even ten feet high.

It was often on the tongue that if a thaw came quickly water would ooze and trickle down the walls of the houses through the ceilings, bringing them down and littering the floors; and God began to seem ungrateful to all, for the armies that had been sent to Palestine to rescue the Sepulchre from the Infidel were in everybody's mind. Even the prelacy could not put their doubts aside, and so weary were all of the cold that it came to be said that the Seine might rise and drown them without anybody caring; better drowning than freezing; and the fear, too, was prevalent that great packs of wolves were assembling in the Orléans forest, and would come one night across the ice and devour the half-starved, who were without power to fight them. Be this as it may, from near and far

the wolves howled their hunger over frozen fields, and under all their blankets the shivering folk bethought themselves over the animals lolloping through the streets, quarrelling over the watchmen and then waiting for the doors to be opened, or giving occasional chase to houseless cats and dogs, and when these lacked following the ducks and geese that had come up from the sea, and grabbing starveling birds hardly able to fly. Very often a fox, sneaking along the river-side in the hope of picking up a rat or two, was picked up himself by the wolves and eaten, despite cousinship. Hawks and hooded crows were about, glad to get a bit of entrail or skin left behind by the wolves, and as for the birds, Héloïse said, they seem all to have come out of the woods and fields hoping to find warmth and food in the city, for though there is not much of either in Paris, still Paris must be warmer than the country, and we always have a few crumbs for them. Do they tell each other? she asked herself, as she overlooked the feathered company gathered about on Madelon's balcony, green and gold finches, sparrows, robins, blackbirds, and thrushes, bull-finches, and even wrens, and as she fed them she caught sight of all the country beyond the river. Never did the drama of life and death cease, taking unexpected turns. A great grey bird came down the sky one day, the silver lining of his wings showing as he wheeled, a heron in search of an open pool, she said; and it was not long before she saw the bird strike at something, but what the capture might be the wriggle along the bank did not express. Was it newt or frog? she asked, or a rat perchance? And after swallowing whatever might have been his breakfast, the bird disappeared into the sedges, raising from time to time a watchful, ecclesiastical head. He has found a pool where the current is likely to break up the ice to-morrow or the day after, she said; he would not have settled himself in the sedges, chosen that corner, if he did not sense a thaw. Ah, a fox is lurking, and will get the heron and the rat together. But the watchful bird rose, escaping capture, leaving behind a hungry fox who watched the grey wings aloft, carrying the bird, it seemed, no faster than himself could run. If I had made my rush a little sooner I might have got him, the fox is saying to himself, Héloïse said, as she entered the house, with the intention of seeking more bread in the kitchen; for there is no end to my beggars, she added. On her way thither she met Madelon returning from the market with a long tale to tell that no food had

come into Paris that morning, carts having been delayed on their way by the snow, which had become like ice. The horses slipped and slithered, she said, unable to get their loads along, and the city farriers were gone to reshoe the horses, but the frosting will soon wear down. And then the farriers will have to reshoe the horses, Héloïse replied; a remark that Madelon seemed to resent, for she retired growling.

Nobody stirred out of doors who could remain within, but walls are poor shelter from great masses of snow piled along the streets, grimy heaps that might be dust-heaps but for patches of white here and there; snow soon loses its beauty in the city. The sky darkened again and the yellow rim over the horizon told of more snow. As soon as it ceased to fall men were at work raising the ditches higher. It began to be felt that none could redeem the city but God. To win him over, Masses were announced, and for these the Canon had to struggle up the street, he and Héloïse supporting each other, and, losing their shoes from time to time in the snow, they spoke, whilst they sought them, of the cities of the North, whose fate it was to lie three or four months of the year under snow.

But the North has sledges, the Canon said, and great stoves in the houses; we are unprepared against the snow and must pray for a thaw. The noise of stamping feet almost silenced the celebrant, and the preacher could only beg the folk to put their trust in God, and to his exhortations the folk answered only: what have we done to deserve this plague? We are not Egyptians who keep the Lord's people in captivity. Have we not sent the flower of France to Palestine? Of what good to be good if a winter like this is our one reward? God is laughing at us. Such was the talk in the rue des Chantres as the folk went back and forth from the Cathedral through the thin wintry day, a small passage of daylight between the long nights.

It is in our legs that we suffer, Fulbert said; one can keep the body warm but not the legs. And Héloïse thought of the wolf-skin she had refused as they sat watching the spluttering log, not daring to ask Madelon for another, knowing well she would say: if you ask for any more logs it will be the worse for you; you'll be without dinner in three weeks, for there is no telling that the snow won't be with us till then.

The last time they asked for a log she told them that she had seen

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snow lying on the ground in Brittany for months at a time, and that whilst the snow lasted no logs could come up from the forest. Only in our beds are we warm, Héloïse said, speaking at the end of a long silence; but we can not remain in bed all day and all night. She had a little pan that she kept within her muff, for her finger-tips burned so bitterly that she could not fix her attention on her book. The Canon had long ago ceased to read, and sat stamping his feet on the cold hearth in which there were but some glimmering ashes, careless whether Héloïse was reading Plato or Aristotle, or had returned from philosophy to poetry; nor had he any longer thought of her future, whether she should return to the cloister or marry one of the great nobles that came up from the provinces for the Easter ceremonies at the Cathedral. And giving utterance one day to the hope that if she did marry she would live in a well-wooded country, she asked him if he would like to see her a comtesse or an abbess, and they talked for a while on the married and the celibate life, without much interest in these questions, a burning log having become more important.

It may be that a change is come; let us go and see, said the Canon. The stars were shining, alas! and they went to their beds disconsolate, thinking of a completely frozen river, for if this last calamity were to fall out then indeed they might say their prayers and prepare for paradise. Or hell, Héloïse said, and the Canon had no heart to reprove her for her levity.

But the frost they detected in the air did not last. The wind changed, clouds began to gather, and once more they were living in a moist atmosphere, but the cold was not less than before, for the streets were full of snow. Dirty, ignominious, earth-disgraced snow, the Canon said, and leaving the rest of his thoughts to be inferred from the context, that the fallen snow and the fallen soul were comparable, he started to wade through mud and water to the Cathedral, stopping on his threshold to remind Héloïse that news had not come from Palestine for many weeks. Have the Crusaders been defeated? he asked. Is the Sepulchre again in the hands of the Saracens?

The rain poured and the wind howled. Now and then the sky blackened a little, giving token of another down-pour, and an icy flood carried by a whirling wind swept about the streets. We are back in the original marsh, the people said; the earth is without

green and the sky without blue. Not a streak of blue for many months. A late spring, said another, and his words were understood as ironical. God indeed seemed angry with his people, for at the beginning of March snow began to fall again and an old willow, the one, Héloïse said, in which the bees had made their nests, crashed into the storm and was carried away by the swirling water. Madelon, who thought more of honey than of the bees, said: we have lost many pounds of honey. Not many, Héloïse answered; for the bees perhaps died this winter for lack of honey; we may have taken too much from them. Of that I know naught, Madelon said; they are gone and the tree with them. But Madelon, said Héloïse, are we going to get any spring this year? It doesn't look much like it at present, Madelon answered, the snow still on the ground and we in March. And Héloïse, who had not seen many springs, fell to thinking that the prophecy that the world would end in the year one thousand was about to be fulfilled. The prophets had miscalculated the date of the end by a hundred years, that was all. The beginning of the end is at hand, she said; and next morning she awoke to find that she was mistaken, the sky was blue, the air warm, and before evening the passengers were walking in the middle of the street to avoid the drip, talking about the rising river and saying that boats would soon be plying about the Cathedral. But the river sank despite the melting snows, and every morning an almost summer sun was busy drying up the streets, turning the marshes into fields again, the genial warmth and gaiety of the sky permitting Héloïse to sit in the company-room without a fire, a rug about her knees, reading in the window, hearing (in her mind's ear, of course) the great minstrel Orpheus singing as the galley pranced over the curling waves, through the Hellespont, passing island after island, the Chorus telling new stories of adventure, enchantment, and prophecy, that new worlds shall be discovered in the age to come, that the imprisoning ocean shall be thrown open till there shall be no land alone, no ultima Thule.

TEN POEMS

BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

MICHAEL ROBARTES AND THE DANCER

He

Opinion is not worth a rush;
In this altar-piece the knight,
Who grips his long spear so to push
That dragon through the fading light,
Loved the lady; and it's plain
The half-dead dragon was her thought
That every morning rose again
And dug its claws and shrieked and fought.
Could the impossible come to pass
She would have time to turn her eyes,
Her lover thought, upon the glass
And on the instant would grow wise.

She

You mean they argued.

He

Put it so;
But bear in mind your lover's wage
Is what your looking-glass can show,
And that he will turn green with rage
At all that is not pictured there.

She

May I not put myself to College?

TEN POEMS

He

Go pluck Athena by the hair;
 For what mere book can grant a knowledge
 With an impassioned gravity
 Appropriate to that beating breast,
 That vigorous thigh, that dreaming eye?
 And may the devil take the rest.

She

And must no beautiful woman be
 Learned like a man?

He

Paul Veronese

And all his sacred company
 Imagined bodies all their days,
 By the lagoon you love so much,
 For proud, soft, ceremonious proof
 That all must come to sight and touch;
 While Michael Angelo's Sistine roof
 His Morning and his Night disclose
 How sinew that has been pulled tight,
 Or it may be loosened in repose,
 Can rule by supernatural right
 Yet be but sinew.

She

I have heard said
 There is great danger in the body.

He

Did God in portioning wine and bread
 Give man His thought or His mere body?

She

My wretched dragon is perplexed.

He

I have principles to prove me right.
It follows from this Latin text
That blest souls are not composite,
And that all beautiful women may
Live in uncomposite blessedness,
And lead us to the like—if they
Will banish every thought, unless
The lineaments that please their view,
When the long looking-glass is full,
Even from the foot-sole think it too.

She

They say such different things at school.

EASTER 1916

I

I have met them at close of day
Coming with vivid faces
From counter or desk among grey
Eighteenth-century houses.
I have passed with a nod of the head
Or polite meaningless words,
Or have lingered awhile and said
Polite meaningless words,
And thought before I had done
Of a mocking tale or a gibe
To please a companion
Around the fire at the club,

TEN POEMS

Being certain that they and I
But lived where motley is worn:
All changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

II

That woman's days were spent
In ignorant good will,
Her nights in argument
Until her voice grew shrill.
What voice more sweet than hers
When young and beautiful,
She rode to harriers?
This man had kept a school
And rode our winged horse.
This other his helper and friend
Was coming into his force;
He might have won fame in the end,
So sensitive his nature seemed,
So daring and sweet his thought.
This other man I had dreamed
A drunken, vain-glorious lout.
He had done most bitter wrong
To some who are near my heart,
Yet I number him in the song;
He, too, has resigned his part
In the casual comedy;
He, too, has been changed in his turn,
Transformed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

III

Hearts with one purpose alone
Through summer and winter, seem
Enchanted to a stone
To trouble the living stream
The horse that comes from the road,

The rider, the birds that range
From cloud to tumbling cloud,
Minute by minute change.
A shadow of cloud on the stream
Changes minute by minute;
A horse-hoof slides on the brim;
And a horse plashes within it
Where long-legged moor-hens dive
And hens to moor-cocks call.
Minute by minute they live:
The stone's in the midst of all.

IV

Too long a sacrifice
Can make a stone of the heart.
O when may it suffice?
That is heaven's part, our part
To murmur name upon name,
As a mother names her child
When sleep at last has come
On limbs that had run wild.
What is it but nightfall?
No, no, not night but death.
Was it needless death after all?
For England may keep faith
For all that is done and said.
We know their dream; enough
To know they dreamed and are dead.
And what if excess of love
Bewildered them till they died?
I write it out in a verse—
MacDonagh and MacBride
And Connolly and Pearse
Now and in time to be,
Wherever green is worn,
Are changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

September 25th, 1916

UNDER SATURN

Do not because this day I have grown saturnine
 Imagine that some lost love, unassailable
 Being a portion of my youth, can make me pine
 And so forget the comfort that no words can tell
 Your coming brought; though I acknowledge I have gone
 On a fantastic ride I swear my horse's flanks were spurred
 By childish memories of an old cross Pollexfen
 And of a Middleton whose name you never heard
 And of a red-haired Yeats whose looks, although he died
 Before my time, seem like a vivid memory.
 You heard that labouring man who had served my people. He said
 Upon the open road, near to the Sligo quay—
 No, no—not said, but cried it out—"You have come again
 And surely after twenty years it was time to come."
 I am thinking of a child's vow sworn in vain
 Never to leave that valley his fathers called their home.

November, 1919

SIXTEEN DEAD MEN

I

O but we talked at large before
 The sixteen men were shot,
 But who can talk of give and take
 What should be and what not?
 While those dead men are loitering there
 To stir the boiling pot.

II

You say that we should still the land
 Till Germany's overcome;
 But who is there to argue that
 Now Pearse is deaf and dumb?
 And is their logic to outweigh
 MacDonough's bony thumb?

III

How could you dream they'd listen
That have an ear alone
For those new comrades they have found
Lord Edward and Wolf Tone,
Or meddle with our give and take
That converse bone to bone.

THE ROSE TREE

I

"O words are lightly spoken,"
Said Pearse to Connolly,
"Maybe a breath of politic words
Has withered our Rose tree;
Or maybe but a wind that blows
Across the bitter sea."

II

"It needs to be but watered,"
James Connolly replied,
"To make the green come out again
And spread on every side,
And shake the blossom from the bud
To be the garden's pride."

III

"But where can we draw water?"
Said Pearse to Connolly,
"When all the wells are parched away;
O plain as plain can be
There's nothing but our own red blood
Can make a right rose tree."

ON A POLITICAL PRISONER

I

She that but little patience knew,
From childhood on, had now so much
A grey gull lost its fear and flew
Down to her cell and there alit,
And there endured her finger's touch
And from her fingers ate its bit.

II

Did she in touching that lone wing
Recall the years before her mind
Became a bitter, an abstract thing,
For thought some popular enmity,
Blind and leader of the blind
Drinking the foul ditch where they lie?

III

When long ago I saw her ride
Under Ben Bulban to the meet,
The beauty of her country-side
With all youth's lonely wildness stirred
She seemed to have grown clean and sweet
Like any rock-bred, sea-borne bird:

IV

Sea-borne, or balanced on the air
When first it sprang out of the nest
Upon some lofty rock to stare
Upon the cloudy canopy,
While under its storm-beaten breast
Cried out the hollows of the sea.

TOWARDS BREAK OF DAY

I

Was it the double of my dream
The woman that by me lay
Dreamed, or did we halve a dream
Under the first cold gleam of day?

II

I thought "there is a waterfall
Upon Ben Bulbin side,
That all my childhood counted dear;
Were I to travel far and wide
I could not find a thing so dear."
My memories had magnified
So many times childish delight,
I would have touched it like a child
But knew my finger would have touched
Cold stone and water. I grew wild
Even accusing heaven because
It had set down among its laws
Nothing that we love over-much
Is ponderable to our touch.

III

I dreamed towards break of day
The cold blown spray in my nostril.
But she that beside me lay
Had watched in bitterer sleep
The marvellous stag of Arthur,
That lofty white stag, leap
From mountain steep to steep.

DEMON AND BEAST

I

For certain minutes at the least
That crafty demon and that loud beast
That plague me day and night
Ran out of my sight;
Though I had long pernned in the gyre
Between my hatred and desire
I saw my freedom won
And all laugh in the sun.

II

The glittering eyes in a death's head
Of old Luke Wadding's portrait said
Welcome, and the Ormonds all
Nodded upon the wall,
And even Stafford smiled as though
It made him happier to know
I understood his plan;
Now that the loud beast ran
There was no portrait in the Gallery
But beckoned to sweet company,
For all men's thought grew clear
Being dear as mine are dear.

III

But soon a tear-drop started up
For aimless joy had made me stop
Beside the little lake
To watch a white gull take
A bit of bread thrown up into the air;
Now gyring down and pernning there
He splashed where an absurd
Portly green-pated bird
Shook off the water from his back;

Being no more demoniac
A stupid happy creature
Could rouse my whole nature.

IV

Yet I am certain as can be
That every natural victory
Belongs to beast or demon.
That never yet had freeman
Right mastery of natural things
And that mere growing old, that brings
Chilled blood, this sweetness brought;
Yet have no dearer thought
Than that I may find out a way
To make it linger half a day.

V

O what a sweetness strayed
Through barren Thebaid,
Or by the Mareotic sea
When that exultant Anthony
And twice a thousand more
Starved upon the shore
And withered to a bag of bones:
What had the Caesars but their thrones?

A MEDIATION IN TIME OF WAR

For one throb of the Artery,
While on that old grey stone I sat
Under the old wind-broken tree,
I knew that One is animate,
Mankind inanimate phantasy.

THE SECOND COMING

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon can not hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre can not hold,
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: a waste of desert sand;
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Wind shadows of the indignant desert birds.

The darkness drops again but now I know
That thirty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

HUNGARIAN NIGHT

BY PAUL MORAND

"I like the tall one with the big hips," said Jean, in drunken obstinacy.

The other was clothed in lean muscles, corded veins, ligaments that showed like bracelets, shadows of bone, and the face of a sacred animal.

In preferring her, I felt the easy superiority of a dream, and as if dreaming I took a puerile delight in this formula.

"She pleases me as the product of a unicorn and a red ass."

A dahlia fell into my open mouth to the gullet. Battle of flowers. A garden passing in the air.

Sustained by Schubert's *Militär Marsch*, the two Jewish girls danced on the stage, nervous, pathetic, paying no attention to our drunken stare, to the smoke lassos, or the sparkle of the glasses which persons with their heads shaved blue were emptying with a sucking sound, like wash basins.

When the Hungarian orchestra had succumbed, the Sisters Häjyz Nanas came to pay their respects, Jean's preference, wig in hand, offering to laughter the cranial vault of a merchant of Tangier.

"It's a man, you were fooled."

"I was fooled."

In spite of a ceremonious entrance, two palm trees, an admission charge of two hundred crowns, and a doorman like a noble father at the An Der Wien theater, having the manners of an archduke (he was actually the General von H. of Przemyśl), the Jardin de Paris was a chop-house. But the only one of any importance open in Vienna during July, the days when there was no *bal masqué* at the Belvidere.

Irritated by the lights, the chandelier rolled, a cut-glass porcupine, in the midst of Venetian mirrors, which reflected the red damask walls and rococo loges copied from Schönbrunn. Irreconcilable as a jazz band and a symphony orchestra, the women in short skirts affronted the women in long skirts. The former had in their favour a certain insinuation of the thighs; a way of saying "mon

cher"; pendants which opened revealing the donor, a grand duke, since hanged, preserved in the glitter of brilliants, their souvenirs of Nice; they recalled some luncheons of the Archduke Otho at Negresco's, some parties of the Queen of Naples, with adieux from their nodding aigrettes, their big, noble Lewis hats, and a bitterness in their soft cheeks which the Greek *nouveaux riches* used to appropriate.

The young ones had nothing to offer but energy, nervous excesses, and those amenities which led the others to call them "modernists."

When my dancer came up I offered her the imitation tokay which oscillated in a flask on our gold table.

"Where are you from?"

She answered with her name. "Zaël."

She was from Pesth. Between us we had only a few words of German.

"And you?"

"From Paris."

"*Schlecht* Paris," she said, putting out her tongue.

Italian lieutenants blocked the doorway, pink carnations in their cartridge belts. Roumanian captains who had come to commandeer cattle, were choosing ladies with sheep heads. The Reparations Commission was surveying the local champagne.

"My friend really believed that your partner was your sister."

"We are not related. He is from Gratz and his name is Samuel Ehrenfeld. Do you want me to get him? Why do you laugh, little uncle?"

"In French it is funny to call oneself Samuel Field-of-Honour."

For two hundred and eighty crowns we had cigars of dry grass and saucers of currants. Zaël impaled them on a straw.

"What do you say?"

"That you've a nice little mug," said Jean, circumscribing his face with a finger, as they do in pantomimes.

Zaël balanced on her chair with difficulty the body of an Israelite sylph, no breast, back a little rounded, arms ending in nervous, practical hands, too well developed for their seventeen years (we have yearly at least one like this at the Conservatory), but a fine skin and the wild air of an exile and a pick-up.

"What do you think of Bela Kun?" asked Jean suddenly starting an interview.

"Bela Kun!" she praised him in Yiddish. "He is in Vienna. But he was King of Hungary, little uncle. He is very rich. Soon he will be King in Vienna too. Ehrenfeld says he is much liked in Moscow, and that he will also go to Italy. They will hang all the Hungarians who throw Jews into wells."

At half past eleven the Jardin de Paris closed, and Zaël suggested the Moulin Rouge with its special entrance on St Petersplatz. It was a Secession mausoleum, in black marble with stylized gold cords and a ceiling of silver squares, ornamented with turquoise. The proprietor, formerly a captain of the Guard, had the fine, insignificant face of a tennis champion; he seated us at the edge of a black carpet sown with roses. We ordered a violet liqueur. Zaël made friends with some little foreigners in pearl gray cutaways, pumps, and white socks. Dressed in a frock coat, with side whiskers framing his porcelain face, an old ministerial manager was passing hard-boiled eggs in a gilded basket.

I started to blow my nose. Zaël flung herself, with an exclamation, upon my cashmere handkerchief. The silk drove her mad.

"Little uncle, I implore you, give me this for a present!"

"It will be a good-bye present. We are leaving to-morrow for Budapesth: by the Danube, because of the strike."

"Take me with you," she cried excitedly, "I want to see my grandfather. He is the sexton at the synagogue."

"You have no passport."

"I know a Russian who makes them near the station; his name is Apotheoz."

Something about her is irresistible. Except when she bites my arm to the bone, out of happiness. I protest.

"The Eternal said: 'Thou shalt not eat that which is impure.'" She listens, her body motionless to the eyes; but in her eyes are all the promises. Jean also admits it is sorcery. We go into one of the special rooms, where a red lamp grows congested among satanic black curtains.

"Drei cocktails."

Roaches run about on gold-lacquered tables. Zaël lets herself be kissed without its deflecting her argument.

"Take me along. My grandfather is so old, so sick. I have'n't seen him for eighteen months, and if you don't, I never shall see him. I am his *star*. . . . It is written 'Misfortune will come to

him who watches not over his ancestors, and whose feet stay not at home.' The old man never goes out for fear of being murdered. A year ago one of my brothers was knocked on the head with a night-stick at Szegedin. Samarie, the other, is in New York. He writes articles in favour of our race; we are suspected by the police. All the same I'll go with you, little uncles; you are foreigners with white passports, and no one will dare to say anything to me."

We were going down the river, laid flat by the north wind, between elevators standing erect like trumpets of cement, connected by little cars on wheels. For a moment more, the green domes, the palace facades, the broken windows, reviewed by equestrian bronzes; among gasometers and in the midst of mobs of unemployed Vienna was bowing like a dowager in distress. We passed lighters loaded with war material, filled to the sinking point with unbelievable iron junk, ornamental iron work, wheels, rust; a whole country continuing to give herself up by pieces. Then the Danube spread out, as all rivers do, accepted only the sky, setting willows between itself and the plain, taking a base from the grainless mills, swift, fleeing the bridges.

Zaël was lying between Jean and myself in a steamer chair. She had put on her silk dress for the journey; round her forehead was a white satin ribbon; her legs were bare in velvet slippers. Overhead on the awning which snapped in the wind, the smoke rolled black shadows.

"I am happy to be with my little uncles."

Then the plain of Hungary, with its reverberation of ripe grain, cut by firm belts of acacias, weighted with mills, gave place to mountains. The river narrowed. Pine woods stood in separate blocks, keeping their rank in spite of the slope, dark from the edge like posters. Glimpsed villages, gathered about a bulbous steeple. As we approached Pesth, red and naked men and women appeared, bathing and shouting along the banks. Boats loaded with the wails of accordions rolled in the wake of the steamer. Apricot-sellers in embroidered tunics, climbed on board. After the Czecho-Slovak frontier, Hungarian subalterns in threadbare dolmans with twisted moustaches, long starving teeth, and eyes of Turkish mercenaries.

The sun plunged finally into a peacock's tail of clouds. Pesth made itself known by an odour of breweries and tanneries; then an elbow of the river disclosed Buda, with its Regency hotels, its terraced gardens, its puerile, theatrical, barbarous palace. Big hotels with every window lighted were moored the length of promenades, suspended from the sky by the strawberry glow of the roof gardens.

At the Ungaria Jean and I occupied the same room. Zaël's opened into it. The walls were still riddled with machine gun bullets, stripped of plaster by the enfilade fire of monitors. A thick warmth was forgotten in the peppery dishes, which perforated one's cheeks and were only appeased by a little white wine from Presbourg, tasting of silex. We slept through the day, blinds shut against a tawny, incandescent Danube, which calcined the bastions of the Burg, at the feet of parched gardens where coloured glass balls blossomed alone.

Then, in the evening, the city woke. In the restaurants the gipsy orchestras began their commentary: sorrowful altos, cellos with lethargic chests, cymbalums voiceless like harps lapidated with whips of felt. The women, dressed in muslin, in light pongee, their faces and arms burned by the sun, watched, indifferent to klaxons, the armoured motor cars patrolling the city, while the drivers leaned out to pinch them.

After the second day, rather ugly faces began to prowl around us. In spite of our remonstrances the porter failed to return Zaël's passport, pretending that the police had kept it. We were advised not to leave the hotel at night. Strong in the impotence of the authorities, bands of unpaid officers roamed the streets, holding up pedestrians, sandbagging Jews and strangers.

We accompanied Zaël to the synagogue. The Jewish quarters witnessed our visit with anxiety. If we stopped too long in one place, we became aware of furtive eyes looking at us from behind counters. The shops were closed. Galician Jews in gabardines with greasy skull-caps pulled down over their ears, their shoulders covered with dandruff, were selling pamphlets on Zionism, wax candles, and dyed sheepskins. In court-yards, which communicated like subterranean passages, and had a balcony projecting from each floor: a tree, an unharnessed horse, green children.

"The synagogue!" cried Zaël, sniffing with wide nostrils the Jewish odour of the staircase. "Wait for me a minute."

She came down again, not having been able to get in. The old man was shut up inside and didn't dare to open the door. Ragged soldiers stood at the head of the stair, barring the entrance, and had driven her away.

"Their feet run to do evil," she said, "and they hasten to shed blood."

Coming back to the hotel, we noticed that we were followed. We went to bed about midnight. Zaël came to our room for a drink and a smoke, asking us to leave the door open between. She seemed as usual. She took another of my handkerchiefs and danced a mazarika in her chemise.

In the middle of the night Jean woke me.

"I don't hear anything, but I have a feeling that something has happened while we were sleeping."

We turned on the electricity. It was three o'clock. I jumped out of bed and looked into the next room. Zaël was no longer there. The door into the corridor was open, the sheets thrown back, clothes on the ground. The impression of a man's foot remained on the pillow. The odour of some drug hung in the air.

"Chloroform," said Jean.

We rang. No one answered. At daybreak the night watchman appeared: he was a Neapolitan with the clay-tinged face of one who is ageing. He had heard nothing, seen nothing. Nobody had left the hotel.

"It is inadmissible that any one should disappear in these times from a hotel like this," I said. "We shall go to the police."

The Neapolitan watchman smiled.

"The place must be searched from cellar to attic."

"There isn't any attic, sir. As for the cellar . . . the Ungaria is of course a palace, but I don't know of anybody who would risk going down into it in the present state of things. The cellars are very extensive. And they communicate with the Danube. Believe me, sir, I don't wish to frighten you, but it would be much better to look about in a few hours in the neighbourhood of the dam at St Margaret Island."



Courtesy of M. Knoedler and Co.
KNEELING GIRL. ARTHUR B. DAVIES

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WALT WHITMAN'S LOVE AFFAIRS

BY EMORY HOLLOWAY

THAT the centennial year of America's most autobiographic poet should have come and gone with students still very much in the dark concerning some of the fundamental mysteries of his life and work is perhaps less strange than paradoxical. Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* may be assumed to reveal, as it professes to do, the whole personality of the author; but not every reader knows how to take that revelation, where to allow for the author's conscious or unconscious distortion of fact or for his sublimation of experience. I do not myself attempt to set forth in this article the whole story, or even a complete theory, of his *affaires de coeur*; but a great deal of research has unearthed a considerable amount of new evidence, which I shall present as consistently as I can.

It is a matter of immeasurable bad fortune that we know so little of Whitman's friendships before the age of twenty. He who was later to write *Calamus* and *Children of Adam* must have craved such attachments during adolescence, but just how far this craving went unsatisfied no one knows. A poem of his twentieth year, however, as well as some of his early essays, indicates that he had already known the pangs of unreturned affection so often that they found utterance in his verse. So despondent did he become as to long for death, hoping in another world to find his soul's mate:

"O, mighty powers of Destiny!
When from this coil of flesh I'm free—
When through my second life I rove,
Let me but find *one* heart to love,
As I would wish to love:

"Let me but meet a single breast,
Wherein this tired soul its hope may rest,
In never-dying faith: ah, then,
That would be bliss all free from pain,
And sickness of the heart.

"For vainly through this world below
 We seek affection. Nought but woe
 Is with our earthy journey wove;
 And so the heart must look above,
 Or die in dull despair."

Were there space in this article to linger amid the juvenilia of this chaste, affectionate, wistful youth, it could be shown that out of this unreturned affection grew both Whitman's Narcissian "egotism" and also his catholic humanitarianism. The turn in both of these directions, but especially in the latter, became more pronounced during his twenties, a period in which he "shivered a lance in the lists of high debate" on many questions of reform. This was an expression of the puritan idealism he had inherited from his New England ancestry. But he was epicurean as well, a rare and exacting hedonist, a poetic "caresser of life." I suppose we shall never know the story of Whitman's intimacies during the days of his early journalism in New York and Brooklyn (1841-1848), but the only biographer who appears to know anything authentic about it (John Burroughs) traces to this period of 'body-jolliness' poems of both the Children of Adam and the Calamus types, that is to say, poems inspired by women and poems inspired by men. However, there is no record of any dominating friendship or romance in this period of his life, an age at which many passionate poets are oscillating between a mistress and the muse. But when, at the age of almost twenty-nine, Whitman left New York for a three months' residence in the "seductive South," legend has it that he encountered a genuine rival to his art.

Biographers who believe that there was a very significant Whitman romance in New Orleans in 1848 have based their theory largely on the following bits of evidence:

1. In reply to persistent and disconcerting queries from his English admirer, John Addington Symonds, concerning the inner meaning of some of Whitman's poems of affection, the poet wrote, on August 19, 1890, the following sentences, so cryptic as to give his biographers more trouble than any other he ever put on paper: "My life, young manhood, mid-age, times South, etc., have been jolly bodily, and doubtless open to criticism. Tho' unmarried I have had six children—two are dead—one living, Southern grand-

child, fine boy, writes to me occasionally—circumstances (connected with their fortune and benefit) have separated me from intimate relations.” Horace Traubel records a number of rather indefinite allusions to the matter made to him by Whitman during the very last years of the poet’s life, and both he and Mr T. B. Harned mention the old man’s promise to give them, his literary executors, a deposition concerning the facts of his “secret”—a promise which, however, he never found the right mood to keep.

2. Whitman’s departure from the congenial Southern city, in which he had pleasant employment, was sudden, and the reasons he gave for it have seemed inadequate and incomplete; hence some biographers have surmised that the real reason lay in a romance which threatened his prophetic and artistic independence.

3. Until recently none of Whitman’s characteristic verse could be traced back beyond the 1848 journey to New Orleans, so that the experiences of this journey are sometimes taken to be the inspiration which liberated his song.

4. A poem, *Once I Pass’d through a Populous City*, seems to describe a transitory residence in some picturesque city of which the poet can recall only the passionate attachment of a woman who detained him there and was broken-hearted at his parting.

From these facts Mr H. B. Binns, M. Leon Bazalgette, and others have elaborated a fairly complete theory, though not without individual variations; with the result that it is now quite commonly assumed that Whitman did have a *liaison* in New Orleans in 1848. A young man of fine personal presence—so the story goes—he was seen by a Southern woman of high social standing, for whom to see him was to love him. This attachment, the responsibility for which is usually placed at the lady’s door (despite Whitman’s confession of his own culpability), in time bore fruit. An obstacle to an open marriage with the penniless Northern journalist had been encountered, however, in the pride of the inamorata’s family. Accordingly, in some versions of the story, a secret marriage is hypothecated (again despite the evidence of the letter to Symonds) and Whitman is required to give a pledge of secrecy concerning his connection with the proud and aristocratic family of his lover. Then, having in three months learned the mysteries of love, Whitman returned north and began the *Leaves of Grass* in the inspiration of his first great romance.

Now, Whitman may indeed have had a serious love affair in New Orleans, but in the light of new evidence we shall have to modify this explanation of how it all occurred and perhaps assign it to a later journey to the South, even if we are not compelled to abandon the common theory altogether. I have examined a manuscript diary of the poet in the Bucke collection of Whitmaniana which proves conclusively that the cause of his precipitate departure from the South was an estrangement between him and his employers and a difference over money matters. Thus it appears that the early and unexpected termination of his sojourn in New Orleans had no connection with romance. Moreover, the name "Whitman" does not appear as that of the father to any child whose birth was entered, as the law required, on the records of the city's Health Department—at least not before 1850. Nor is it in the archives of the old St. Louis Cathedral, whose baptismal records included the great majority of the births in the city, both legitimate and natural. Neither of these records, however, is at all complete. And as to the *a posteriori* evidence of the maturer and more poetic composition which followed the New Orleans residence, it may be true that the first rhythmical lines of the Leaves were written just after the return north rather than just before departing for the South; but they appear in a notebook bearing the date 1847, to which year, for various reasons which can not here be set forth, we must assign his first definite efforts to compose the unique volume which was to see the light of print in 1855. The latter part of this notebook contains, to be sure, the first draft of the Song of Myself, Sections 28-29, which deal with sexual ecstasy; but Whitman's letter to Symonds and John Burrough's Notes (1867) both imply that the period of Whitman's 'body-jolliness' covered his earlier years (1840-1855) as well.

There remains the evidence of the poem, Once I Pass'd through a Populous City. Those who are familiar with Whitman's unchronological grouping of his poems will recall that in each edition (since 1860, when it first appeared in print) this lyric has been placed in the Children of Adam section, devoted to the celebration of love between the sexes. But when, a few years ago, I discovered the original manuscript of this poem in a private library in New York, I found that, historically, it belongs next I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing, among the Calamus poems, which glorify that

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intimate friendship of man for man which in mid-life Whitman preached as a sort of sentimental-religious democracy. I quote the manuscript, omitting only words stricken out in process of composition—words which give no hint of the alterations to appear in the published version.

"Once I passed through a populous city, imprinting
 my brain, for future use, with its shows,
 architecture, customs and traditions
 But now of all that city I remember only the man
 who wandered with me there, for love of me,
 Day by day, and night by night, we were together.
 All else has long been forgotten by me—I remember,
 I say, only one rude and ignorant man, who, when
 I departed, long and long held me by the hand
 with silent lips, sad and tremulous."

I suppose his reason for disguising the emotion which gave birth to this poem was the poet-prophet's desire to avoid a charge of effeminacy. But the important point for the student of Whitman's verse is the fact that a poem of tenderness addressed to a "rude and ignorant man" (doubtless an early counterpart to the Pete Doyle whom he was to meet in Washington) could, through slight emendations, be transformed into a lyric of man's love for woman (or is it woman's love for man?) on which biographers might unsuspectingly build a romantic story. The history of the poem goes far, I think, toward showing that Whitman retained in his maturity some of the sexually indiscriminate affection of childhood. And his ability to direct his romantic sentiments toward man as well as toward woman accounts, perhaps, for a certain indefinable attraction which healthy-minded men like Dr Bucke and healthy-minded women like Mrs Gilchrist have felt in his verse. The artist is expected to pass in his imagination from the man's point of view to the woman's and back again at will; Whitman is unique among the great poets of the world, unless Shakespeare be an exception, in his power to do this with his heart. This peculiarity, he seems to have thought, indicated his kinship with the great religious teachers of the world. But he also knew that such a nature as his would be misunderstood by most men, and that it might even prove

dangerous to him. In an unpublished manuscript memorandum of 1868 he thus admonishes himself: "Depress the adhesive [manly love] nature. It is in excess, making life a torment." Earth, My Likeness is a poetic cry from this inner conflict.

It is now clear that if there were a romance during Whitman's first visit to New Orleans, its existence, its date, and its character must be established by new evidence. A few scraps of such evidence exist. Nine days before Whitman left New Orleans he published in the *Daily Crescent*, on the staff of which he was employed at the time, a humorous skit describing his experiences at a masked ball where he met, at his own insistent request, and instantly fell in love with, a charming lady; but she, to his discomfiture and great dismay, soon proved to be already married. The sophisticated reminiscence concludes with a perplexed meditation on the ironies of human mating:

"It is very evident that she was *the* one [the ideal lover whom he had sought in vain since his eighteenth year]; and yet it astonishes me how she could take her present husband for me. There is no similarity, whatever, between us. She was still young, and no chance of being an old maid; while he appeared as careless of his wife's charms as I did of his existence. I wish them both much happiness, altho' I am the sufferer by it."

This might be passed by as merely an exaggerated, if indeed not a fictitious, account of the ludicrous mistake of an impulsive youth, who could screen himself behind a *nom de plume*, but for the curiously corroborative testimony of one of Whitman's more intimate friends. In the *Philadelphia Record*, August 12, 1917, Mr Francis Howard Williams, who was acquainted with Whitman for fifteen years previous to the latter's death, is reported in an interview as saying:

"Walt was sensitive when people asked him why he never married. He talked pretty freely to me about his early personal affairs. There was one woman whom he would have married had she been free; that was the married woman he met in his sojourn in New Orleans when a young man. Her husband knew of their love, too, I believe."

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If this may be taken as an accurate report of Whitman's statements, and if it be not a mistaken allusion to another romance presently to be mentioned, then it may of course bear upon the interpretation of the Crescent article and it may likewise account for the journey or journeys which Whitman is now known to have subsequently made to the South.

In the *Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1907, appeared some very interesting personal recollections of Whitman written by the late Mrs Ellen M. Calder, formerly Mrs William Douglas O'Connor. In the Bucke collection of Whitmaniana I saw, some three years ago, what appeared to be an earlier draft of this article, in which I noted the following hitherto unpublished passage:

"He [Whitman] had met a certain lady, and by some mischance a letter revealing her friendship for him fell into her husband's hands, which made this gentleman very indignant and jealous, and thereupon, in the presence of his wife and another lady, he abused Walt. All that excited Walt's sympathy for the lady, over and above the admiration and affection he felt for her, so that in telling about it, he said, 'I would marry that woman to-night if she were free.' Correspondence was kept up between them for some time after that, and he was very strongly attracted to this lady. This is the only instance I have known where he was strongly attracted toward any woman in this way. It was this lady for whom he wrote the little poem in *Children of Adam* beginning: "Out of the rolling ocean, the crowd."

Describing this lady to me he said that she was quite fair, with brown hair and eyes, and rather plump and womanly and sweet and gentle, and he said that she bore herself with so much dignity and was so keenly hurt by what her husband had said, that I think that drew her to him more. It was in '64 (?).

In connection with the above:—The idea that he conveyed to me was that he did not think it would have been well for him to have formed that closest of ties, he was so fond of his freedom; would have been a great mistake if he had ever married. He said to me many times that he did not envy men their wives but that he did envy them their children. He often used this expression, 'Well, if I had been caught young I might have done certain things or formed certain habits.' "

I possess letters written to Whitman in 1863 by an army surgeon which refer to the former's having a mistress in Washington at that time. Possibly she was the one whose story Whitman confided to Mrs O'Connor.

Now, some biographers are inclined to question Whitman's statement that he was a father, while others reduce the estimate of his illegal progeny; in any case, their existence rests solely on Whitman's own testimony given at an age when, it is pointed out, he may have been subject to hallucinations. But if there were a child, or children—the number of his supposititious offspring concerns students of Whitman's verse less than does the history of his emotional and moral nature—and if by any chance it were born into the family of another, with or without the knowledge of the husband, then we should be less puzzled by the odd phraseology of the letter to Symonds. The three parties to this hypothetical tragic triangle might have agreed to sacrifice their own feelings in order to safeguard the legal, social, and financial standing of the innocent child, allowing it to pass for legitimate on the condition that Whitman should forego the "intimate relations" to which he alluded in his confession. Some colour is given to this hypothesis by the fact that each bit of new evidence we have examined in this article relates to Whitman's attraction to a married woman. And yet I must add that after wide researches and much study I find it not impossible to doubt the existence of Whitman's children.

Our knowledge of the history of the Washington romance is of course fragmentary. Without here attempting a detailed analysis, I would suggest, however, that several poems of the period seem to bear upon it, notably *I Hear You Solemn-Sweet Pipes of the Organ* (1865-6), a beautiful lyric which I take to be a companion to *Out of the Rolling Ocean the Crowd* (1865), *Not Youth Pertains to Me* (1865), *To a Certain Civilian* (1865), *O Me! O Life!* (1865), *Ah Poverties, Wincings, and Sulky Retreats* (1865), and *Tears* (1867). The last of these but one is clearly the defiant battle-cry of a strong man struggling for his self-respect with the unconquered animal nature which made him a "child of Adam." I feel confident that this poem, particularly, had a definite autobiographic genesis because of its marked similarity to passages in a Whitman diary of 1868, hitherto unpublished, which put the whole

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matter of Whitman's disregard of conventions in a new and more human light. They indicate that the course of love in this wartime romance did not run smooth for the poet—unless, indeed, they refer to some other amour! A page is torn from the diary, the next one beginning in the middle of a sermon to the author himself on the subject of his "pursuit" of some one, whose initial has been carefully erased from the page and replaced by a number:

"cheating, childish abandonment of myself, fancying what does not really exist in another, but is all the time in myself alone—utterly deluded and cheated by *myself* & my own weakness—*Remember where I am most weak, & most lacking.* Yet always preserve a kind spirit & demeanor to 16. But *Pursue Her No More.* A cool, gentle (less demonstrative) *more* UNIFORM DEMEANOR—give to poor, help any,—be indulgent to the criminal & silly and low persons generally & the ignorant—but *SAY* little—make no explanations—*give no confidences*—never attempt puns, or plays upon words, or utter sarcastic comments, or (under ordinary circumstances) hold any discussions or arguments."

This frank record is as painful as it is interesting. Even the hostile critic must recognize here no *poseur*, but a hapless and humbled man. However "open to criticism" Whitman's relations with women may have been, he renders such criticism by others at once superfluous and unkind by confessing himself (under the circumstances, what other confessor or judge could he have had?) and sternly meting out his own penance. Again, as in his early youth, we see private disappointment converted into humanitarian sympathy. But he was to learn that such passion as his could not be subdued by a single sermon to himself. A year and a half later he writes:

"June 17—*It is IMPERATIVE, that I obviate & remove myself (and my orbit) at all hazards, from this incessant enormous, & abnormal PERTURBATION.*"

A month afterwards he approves this resolution, and rewrites it:

"TO GIVE UP ABSOLUTELY & for good, from this present hour, this

feverish, fluctuating, useless undignified pursuit of 164—too long, (much too long) persevered in—so humiliating—It must come at last & had better come now—(It cannot possibly be a success)

LET THERE FROM THIS HOUR BE NO FALTERING, NO GETTING—
[word erased] *at all henceforth (not once, under any circumstances)—avoid seeing her, or any talk or explanations—OR ANY MEETING WHATEVER, FROM THIS HOUR FORTH, FOR LIFE."*

This is abundantly unclear, but it appears to be the resolution of a proud and passionate character to swallow the bitter realization that its love is unreturned, and to accept the fact that something has occurred for which explanations would be futile. How little could the O'Connor household have understood Whitman's fondness for Cowley's quatrain,

"A mighty pain to love it is,
And yet a pain that love to miss;
But of all pains, the greatest pain
It is to love, but love in vain!"

His own heart was the "noiseless, patient spider," throwing out filament after filament of its fine-spun life in a quenchless but unsatisfied hope to make the "ductile anchor . . . catch somewhere."

But, because he was a genius, out of his poverty he could enrich the world. As early as 1860 he had learned to sing, like Heine,

"I love a certain person ardently, and my love was not returned;
Yet out of that, I have written these songs."

Probably these 1868-9 notebook memoranda, wet with the tears of secret shame, mark the exit of the "love of woman" from his life. When, in the fall in 1869, his "noblest woman friend," Anne Gilchrist, offered to him her affection in letters of unusual beauty and depth of feeling, he seemed to have had little more personal love to give her than to any other reader of his verse, whom he assures,

"I have loved many women and men, but I love
None better than you."

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At any rate, from this time forth we have an altered Whitman. The Man and the Missionary in him have waged a long war, but Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun (1865) has already indicated that the Missionary is ultimately to dominate. In Passage to India, Section 5, (originally written as a separate poem, some time before January 20, 1869) the Poet—the "true son of God"—is promised, whose songs will tell the secret, soothe the never-happy hearts of men, and respond to their unappreciated affection. Other re-affirmations of his mission we have in Pioneers! O Pioneers! (1865), in Darest Thou Now O Soul (1868), and in Prayer of Columbus (1874). Battered in body and bruised in his affections, poor and generally rejected of critics, Whitman henceforth has less to say in praise of untrammelled natural impulses, but more and more to sing of democracy, of immortality, and of the soul.

DUST FOR SPARROWS

BY REMY DE GOURMONT

Translated by Ezra Pound

49

It is observed that the doctors most in public esteem are those in whom the minimum of talent is joined to the greatest astuteness.

50

It is a fact, established by science, that idiots understand animals better than any one else.

51

Any one can verify the dementia of a raving lunatic; but is it not strange that there are learned men to decide upon the feebleness or surety of the intelligence of slightly unbalanced persons? Is the plenitude of mental faculties conceivable? Have people not, on the contrary, concluded that genius and madness are equal?

52

What is most admirable in music is the hearing and soul of men.

53

Hearing being the instrument by which all the loftiest ideas and sensations reach our consciousness; the art related to this sense is that which most exalts the mind and goes deepest down into the heart.

54

Is it not curious that for the coldest and most skeptical temperaments, for those most given to buffoonery or calculation, a day

comes, the Bonaparte appears, and they find themselves embarked upon most extraordinary adventures?

55

There are souls whom one can bless like the sun, which sheds prodigal his warmth and pleasure upon all he lightens.

56

There are people born debtors by temperament. Between them and the creditor there is an unclimbable wall, a wall over which nothing passes.

57

Heroes have not the tendency to complaint. They are not snivellers albeit having acquaintance with tears. Were this not so they would be monsters, inadmirable. There would be nothing in them but pride.

58

Love of children is the greatest of loves, for though it is egoistic in its essence, it has no equal in abnegation.

59

Games which excite one because, like cards, they bank on one's *amour-propre*, are doubtless an excellent school for character. They call for invaluable faculties, and furnish arms for the struggle for life, especially for politicians and parliamentarians. One might designate them as sedentary fencing.

60

Pious works unmask the Pharisee. But it would be a grave error to misjudge noble souls who have suffered human weakness. To make literary and historical psychology from this, would be like showing a room with tapestries turned face to the wall.

61

There is a woman with whom we never attain complete sincerity, even though we know that she knows us inside out and that we, ourselves, may count on her benevolence.

63

In their normal state the English overdo their respect and attentions to women in order that, thus, acquired habit may preserve them from indecency when they lose control of themselves.

64

It is nearly evident that those who advocate the death penalty are in closer affinity to the assassins than those who oppose it.

65

There are people deeply convinced that there exists between them and the proletariat a veritable difference of quality, which makes these latter bear without suffering the miseries of life to which they are accustomed.

66

There is nothing more perverted by convention than the sense of smell. Analogous odours produce different impressions according as they have one source or another.

67

The origin of certain repulsions which we feel from things which animals find excellent, lies probably in certain confusions in the child mind and even in the man's mind, between shame and disgust; between virtue and dirtiness; vice and bodily cleanliness.

68

Physical disgust begins as instinctive repulsion; it becomes insuperable in becoming a moral prejudice.

69

[Manuscript undecipherable. E. P.]

70

Milan, the moral capital of Italy, its most active centre of thought, art, and industry, was, in the old days, pregnant of the modern, the monastic, and conventual city par excellence.

71

The head of one lunatic genius may contain more wisdom than those of one hundred thousand idiots.

72

There are words so ordinary, and which have assumed in our minds an aspect so characteristic and precise, that on hearing, they almost give us the sensation of the things which they designate.

73

I have known very religious men in all the professions, as I have known also convinced deists and spiritualists, who were *nevertheless* quite intelligent, very enlightened, very well-balanced in all manifestations of practical activity. Which may, all of it, serve to demonstrate that when one passes out of the realm of the knowable the knowledge of atheist and believer are of perfectly equal equivalence.

74

I have observed that when we Latins have an altercation with Anglo-Saxons we look at the position of their hands before attending to their speech.

75

It is evident that religion does not ameliorate people's characters. I have known many almost devout persons who were none the less, in ordinary life, very nasty, especially to their inferiors.

76

It has been, perhaps, profound wisdom on the part of the Church not to make herself the paladin of all the great human causes, and even to sanction certain crimes, such as slavery, but it is certain that this conduct has alienated from her all generous hearts, all those who thirst for justice.

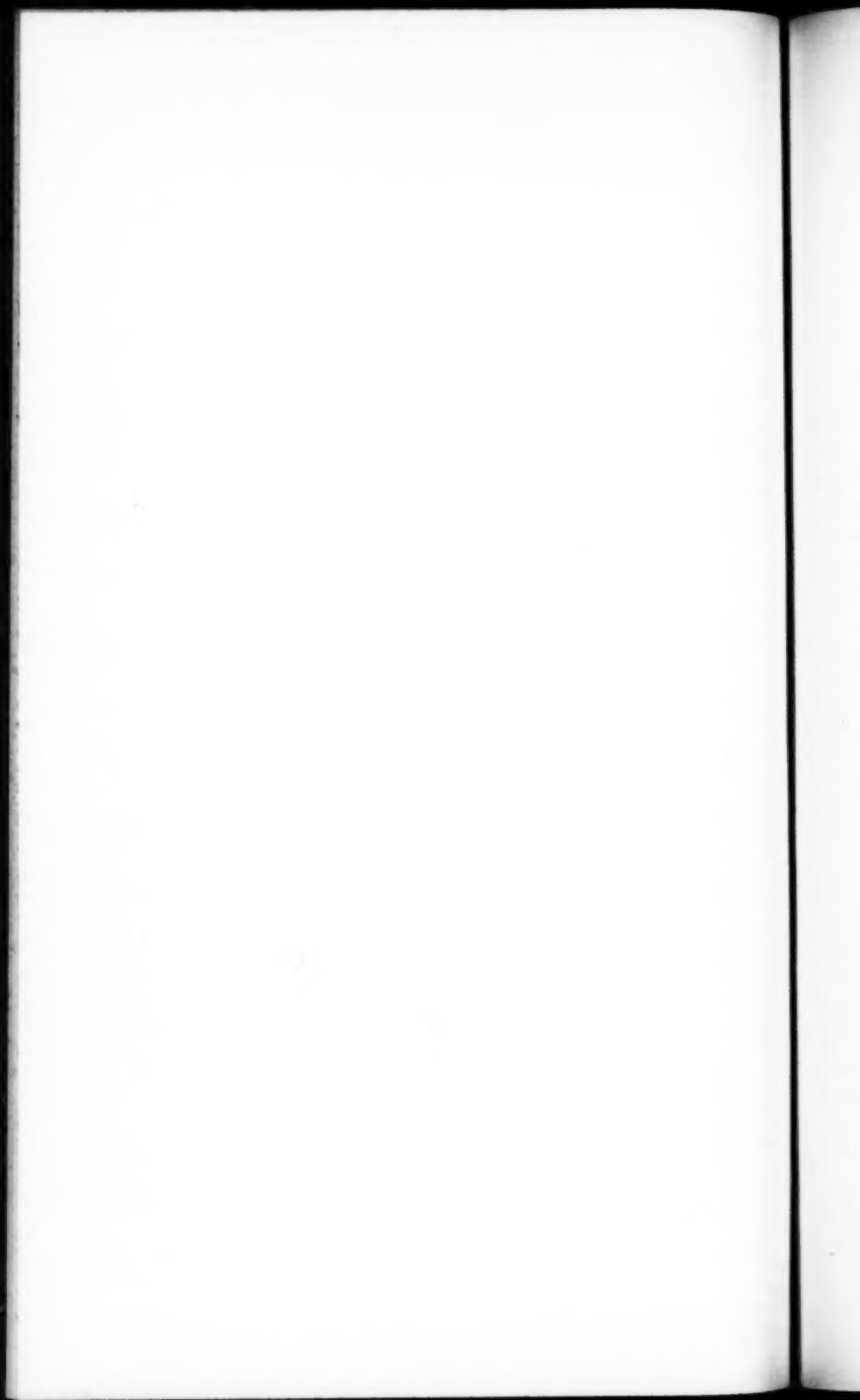
77

It is evident that for the English, the most important part of their religion is that it is Anglican. Most young Englishmen would without much difficulty renounce their part in paradise if they knew that one does not speak English in heaven, that one does not play tennis, that bull-dogs are not admitted, and that one does not have tea with little cakes daily at 5 P. M.



Courtesy of M. Knoedler and Co.

OLIVIA. BY ALBERT STERNER



THE SINGERS IN A CLOUD

BY RIDGELY TORRENCE

Overhead at sunset all heard the choir.
Nothing could be seen except jewelled grey
Raining beauty earthward, flooding with desire
All things that listened there in the broken day;
Songs from freer breathers, their unprisoned fire
Out of cloudy fountains, flying and hurled,
Fell and warmed the world.

Sudden came a wind and birds were laid bare,
Only music warmed them round their brown breasts.
They had sent the splendours pouring through the air,
Love was their heat and home far above their nests.
Light went softly out and left their voices there.
Starward passed for ever all that great cry,
Burning, round the sky.

On the earth the battles war against light,
Heavy lies the harrow, bitter the field.
Beauty, like a river running through the night,
Streams past the stricken ones whom it would have healed
But the darkened faces turn away from sight.
Blind, bewildered nations sow, reap, and fall,
Shadows gather all.

Far above the birdsong bright shines the gold.
Through the starry orchards earth's paths are hung;
As she moves among them glowing fruits unfold,
Such that the heavens there reawaken young.
Overhead is beauty, healing for the old.
Overhead in morning, nothing but youth,
Only lovely youth.

BELPHEGOR

Essay on The Aesthetic of Contemporary Society

BY JULIEN BENDA

THAT THE "PURE EXERCISE" OF EMOTION IS
ITSELF INTELECTION

OUR aesthetes are at great pains to contrast with disorganized works which are full of material, works which are well composed but utterly empty. They take the writings of Montaigne which are so little arranged that often the title of a chapter has nothing to do with its content, and to these "uncultivated but so fertile fields" they oppose the "beautiful symmetrical gardens *where there is nothing.*" But what of the beautiful symmetrical gardens *where there is something?* Those of Buffon? Of Spinoza? of Taine? They take care never to mention them!

A curious thing: this pure exercise—expressly *unintellectual*—of the human emotions, is itself the intellection of emotion! We know that according to our aesthetes the "pure vital urge," unconscious in its essence and free from the understanding, becomes, by its own "dilation and expansion" "conscious of itself and capable of reflecting on its object." (Creative Evolution.) In other terms, the passion of Phèdre becomes, by expansion of itself, the activity which produces the tragedy by Racine, and the upward thrusting of trees the activity which composes treatises on botany. Here also the will of our people is novel only in degree; sentimentalists of every age wanted to believe that sentiment was itself the science of sentiment, was its only science; Mme. de Staël asserted that "we understand the mysteries of the human soul more surely by love than by the most subtle of metaphysics" and Michelet announced that it was "by sympathy for humanity" that Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire discovered the true principles of biology." (The passage is worth quoting. After having told of the devotion displayed by the great savant in trying to save the unfortunate priests during the September massacre, Michelet adds: "As reward to him who had shown such sympathy for humanity

God granted that he should penetrate into the mystery of life, should understand its transformations, as no one had before. This heroic tenderness revealed nature to him; he understood it through his heart.") Moreover we conceive that it would be sweet to say to ourselves that by the (comparatively easy) circumstances of *living* a passion we become profound observers of it; it is obviously agreeable for Mimi Pinson to think that by the mere throbbing of her little heart she is achieving, in power, deeper thoughts on love than those of Stendhal or Spinoza.

Their argument in favour of this desire that the real comprehension of a feeling should be the prolongation of the feeling itself is that, historically, those who have held the most profound views concerning any human emotion are the ones who *experienced* and *lived* that emotion. We admit the fact. But the real question is this: is the activity by which they formed these profound thoughts *of the same nature* as the activity by which they lived their emotion? Can one pass from one to the other by "dilation," that is, by continuity? Or is there, in spite of the fact that the second is perhaps an indispensable antecedent to the first, is there a duality of origin and a hiatus between them? That is one of the questions which need only be asked to be answered. I admit that because a Lespinasse had *lived* the torment of unrequited love she could make this profound observation on a movement of the human soul: "Most women do not need to be loved; they want only to be preferred." But I believe that she discovered this not by a pure *prolongation* of her suffering but by appealing to an entirely different function, namely a singularly acute faculty for forming concepts and relating them to each other; I venture to believe (pardon this lèse-democracy) that the little shopgirl who possesses nothing but her sorrow may "dilate" it to the end of her days without finding anything of the sort. I concede, too, that du Bartas achieved his admirable description of a horse because he exercised each morning by getting down on all fours: prancing, neighing, kicking, *being a horse*; I still think that the elaboration of his picture is an entirely different kind of activity from his neighing. No one has ever denied that *living* an emotion is a good preparation for understanding it, although it remains disquieting to remember that a Froissart who never left his monastic armchair wrote the best descriptions of battles, that a Balzac's presentation of the sufferings

of an anxious mother is unequalled by the product of any woman's pen, and that a description of a horse at least as happy as that of du Bartas was written by Vergil who, according to every probability never once got down on all fours.

At other times we hear of a vital urge which instead of "dilating" to become intellectual activity, "turns upon itself." We ask: Where *of its own motion* does the vital urge acquire the simple desire for such a movement? Isn't that desire alone a sufficient break between the "pure urge" and its own proper nature? an alien importation? properly an infection with the critical spirit? Besides the doctrine formally proclaims: Instinct alone will find, *but it will not seek*, these things (elements of the "profound life"). Let us distinguish again, in all this, the double aspiration of our aesthetes, to bask in pure emotion and to retain at the same time the advantages which they continue to attach to the intellect.

At the bottom of this will that the artist become one with his hero there are desires for other sensations than those which arise from contact with emotion *in action*. There is, first, the desire we mentioned before, of witnessing the spectacle when *distinctions are abolished and two objects are fused into one*—a spectacle singularly disquieting when the two objects are *two souls*. (Our contemporaries' taste for this sort of spectacle is manifested in their rage for those *soi-disant* Catholic teachings (Ed. Le Roy) which explain that the world derives from God by His "*élans*," allowing no break in the continuity of the source of life and life itself. However they may protest in their moments of embarrassment, the systems they build upon this idea are only brilliant modernizations of Alexandrian Emanation.) Then there is the desire that the artist, no longer *external* to his subject, should not be *superior* either. We are here touching upon a very general emotion. We may call it hatred of the idea that the author's relation toward his subject should be one of *transcendence*. It is a hatred which is always keen, no matter what the subject may be, because transcendence implies judgement and freedom of the mind, and it becomes particularly exasperated when that subject is the human heart. [NOTE: To-day the public seems to say to an author: "You are

presenting human emotion; your part is done; you, the intermediary, must disappear." That is evidently one of the reasons for their love of the theatre, where this disappearance seems to be accomplished. Specifically it is one of the reasons for their taste for the plays of M. de Porto-Riche (a taste unavowed only for political reasons) in which a critic recently remarked the intention to give "life directly, life itself, without symbolic transpositions," and, consequently, the possibility of the spectator's being unaware of the author's thought. For the contrary preferences expressed by the seventeenth century for the artist as intermediary between life and ourselves, see M. Lanson's penetrating pages on Boileau.]

This hatred appears in broad daylight when they attack analysis which they have no love for even when it is applied to the inanimate and which they pursue with fury when it attacks the human heart. May we quote here a passage from one of their leaders, already mentioned, which smells marvelously of their spite:

"When we read such proclamations of the intellect bent on showing the existential conditions of absolutely everything, we feel—quite apart from our legitimate impatience at the somewhat ridiculous swagger of the program, in view of what the authors (Spinoza and Taine) are actually able to perform—menaced and negated in the springs of our innermost life. Such cold-blooded assimilations threaten, we think, to undo our soul's vital secrets, as if the same breath which should succeed in explaining their origin, would simultaneously explain away their 'significance.'"
[William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*.]

Who does not feel that even if the explanations of "these authors" were better, the author of this passage would not be more content and that he is exasperated by analysis not because it explains feelings badly but because it pretends to explain them at all?—Finally, in this determination that the artist should be united with his hero, more precisely that he should be "conquered" by his hero, "should lose all capacity to judge him" they want to see the author, far from transcending his subject, dominated, struck down, overwhelmed by it; a spectacle which is obviously

very pathetic. Here, too, the most curious thing is that this desire should become conscious, formal, organized. Let us add that this is one of the elements making for the success of the literature of women, who are commonly as I heard a critic remark by way of praise, "dominated by their subject instead of dominating it."

RELIGION OF SUBJECTIVE ART

Desire that the artist identify himself with the soul he presents leads naturally to the wish that he present his own soul. For with whom could he become more completely at one? That is the religion of *subjective* art, a religion which was formulated by the romantic era but of which we may say that only our age has become fully conscious. It has become almost a precept that an artist ought not to express anything but himself; the majority of our respected authors have in the last twenty years expounded nothing but their souls; people have venerated more than ever, and systematically, those works which are "of the same substance with their authors and their authors' lives" (Pascal, Nietzsche). More than this, they have tried to define, in the heart of the self, a self *more profoundly self*, more unique, more individual, more incommunicable (the self of our pure sensibility, purged of all *idea*, especially of every *general idea*) and have desired that the artist express this self alone. (Hence the violent preference for Baudelaire over the romanticists of 1830.) Finally they have decreed that the expression of his self can not be properly accomplished by the artist's intelligence examining his heart, but only by a mystic communion of the artist with himself, by a sort of aphasic and unintellectual self-embrace, the evocation of which—like that of the "incommunicable" ego—is evidently something infinitely disquieting. It is clear that the desire of French society to enjoy the subjective has made some progress since Le Lac and Souvenir.

The aesthetic of the subjective, too, is so ingrained in the minds of our contemporaries that they do not even conceive of the possibility of any other. Our young people will be as stupefied to think that a master could have written the following lines, as we might be to learn that societies could have existed without venerating honour and courage:

" . . . C'est là qu'un grand peintre, avec pleine largesse,
 D'une féconde idée étale la richesse,
 Faisant briller partout de la diversité,
 Et ne tombant jamais dans un air répété:
Mais un peintre commun trouve une peine extrême
A sortir dans ses airs de l'amour de soi-même;
De redites sans nombre il fatigue les yeux,
Et, plein de son image, il se peint en tous lieux."

Molière.

It is clear that these reproaches would pass as so many compliments to-day. The expression "a common painter" is worth noting. Attachment to one's self considered as a sign of spiritual vulgarity! *Sic transit*. . . .

Here, let us note again, our contemporaries' taste (surely on the decline since the war) for the *cult of the self*; I mean for authors who are devoted to themselves, not so much in a mystic and furious embrace as in the manifest pretension to a considered self-enjoyment and an elegant "dilettantism." In the tranquil pleasure of a soul inhaling itself there is a spectacle "if not moving" at least heady like a perfume, and we can easily understand its attraction for certain advanced sensibilities; the author of *Le Jardin de Bérénice*, unsavoury enough in his much praised ideologic lyricism, evidently is still able to please by the aroma of his vanity. Moreover this trait has other aspects quite as remarkable. For example, that a French society, heir of those who used to say not only "the ego is detestable" but "it is ridiculous to be always talking of one's self, even if only to one's self" (Saint-Evremond), should relish authors whose sentences begin with "I like . . . I am pleased . . . I feel . . ."—that is something which will not fail to surprise the man who is to write the history of education in our country. More than that, a writer's avowed intention to outrage the decencies of his readers is an evident recommendation to the modern public (it is clearly one of the elements in the success of Péguy or Claudel); and apart from the fact that the arbitrary is always exciting, we know that certain delicate souls feel a voluptuous pleasure in being despised. (See the annals of eroticism.)

DESIRE THAT ART PORTRAY THE ELEMENTARY SOUL

We may note a refinement unforeseen by any of their predecessors in this mania of our people for being thrilled by the exhibition of the human soul: I mean their desire that art should treat of the soul in that infinitely disquieting region where it is "pure instinct," "pure desire," "pure act." We are familiar with their veritable religion for that art (Maeterlinck, certain Russians) which deals exclusively with the most elementary feelings—surprise, anger, fear, above all the sexual instinct—and which is pleased to treat them in their entire purity of instinct, that is without the participation not merely of any moral feeling, far less of any *idea*, but even of any *organization*, any emotional *continuity*, any fixity of direction (all "intellectual" things); an art which attempts to show these feelings in their perfect "mobility," in their pure quality of "nascent states," of "soul-disquiet." Clearly, for our aesthetes the ability to portray these exciting regions is the true criterion of art. I have before me a passage in which a popular critic (M. Maurice Donnay, apropos of l'Entrave of Mme. Colette Willy) notes the skill of one of our authors in portraying the feminine soul in its purest mobility; very evidently in the eyes of the critic the success of this effort implies the summit of art far more than the ability to portray Julien Sorel or Baron Hulet. Even better! according to modern aesthetics pure instinct is, fundamentally and beyond discussion, the artistic material *par excellence*, the true material. "Among all the heroines in my plays," says one of our most respected dramatists, "there are three for whom I must confess a certain predilection: Jeannine in l'Enchantement, Maman Colibri, and the heroine of La Marche Nuptiale. Jeannine, perhaps, before all the others, because she is pure, unadulterated instinct." The author adds no word of explanation, so certain is he that such a reason will suffice in the minds of his contemporaries to justify his preference.

We know that one of the reasons for the special devotion of our contemporaries to the art of music is precisely its monopoly of the power to express these elementary soul-states. And now they want it never to express any others. The soul of Isolde is far too "organized." And what has music to do with Hans Sachs, "the herr professor," or Wotan, "the sociological chatterbox!" This aesthetic of the elementary soul leads naturally to the portrayal of women

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and children exclusively; has led to this in the art to which we have alluded.

Do not misunderstand us. We are not trying to contest the prime right of the "pure instinctive" as the subject matter of art. We even think that it is one of the glories of this age to have introduced it. We do denounce the modern desire that it should be the *sole* subject-matter of art, should be, at least, the subject-matter par excellence. Because, you may say, it is the sole *reality*? As if the intelligence were any less real! As if the soul of Goethe were less *real* than that of Mélisande! Because it is "the root of being?" But where have you learned that art must be concerned exclusively with that region? Then tell the real reason: because it is *more exciting!*

The desire to express elementary soul-states exclusively is often combined in our authors with a desire to express their own souls. Thus they express themselves in their elementary states of being, a *genre* in which women excel, and of which the following is a good example:

"I was there, but mutinous, out of harmony and silent, on account of a lizard which appeared and disappeared by magic, on account of an aigrette of lavender swaying under a wasp furred with brown and orange, because of the cry of an invisible shepherd, because of the latticed shadow which moved beneath an olive tree."

We know not only the pleasure but the quite special literary esteem—the admiration—evoked by this manner.

We have just pointed out one more *genre* which is in general demand and in which women excel. We shall see that *all* the literary attributes exalted by modern aesthetics are those which women possess in the highest degree, and which are virtually a monopoly with their sex: the absence of general ideas, religion of the concrete, of the circumstantial, rapid and entirely intuitive perception, frankness about sentiment alone, interest devoted to the self, to the most profound, the most intimate, the most incommunicable part of the self, and so on. *The whole modern aesthetic is made for women.* The men struggle. Many of them try to imitate the literature of their rivals. Alas! they must be resigned: there is a degree of un-intellectuality and immodesty which they will never attain.

We do not speak of the desire of our contemporaries—which seems so natural to them that they do not even express it in words—that the portrayal of the human heart consist in the portrayal solely of love. This is a three hundred year old attitude of French society. Let us nevertheless remember that in the seventeenth century there were some who protested, and not only artists like Corneille who were none too expert in depicting this sentiment; not only Churchmen like Rapin or Bouhours; but men and women of the world: Bussy, the Abbé de Villars, Subligny, Saint-Evremond, Mme. de Sévigné. Do we see any society woman of our time protesting against the plays of M. de Porto-Riche because they deal too exclusively in love?

Their desire that art should paint the elementary soul is, moreover, only an episode in their demand that art be profound, that it depict the profound regions, the profound recesses of the soul. As if great artists like Ronsard or La Fontaine were profound!

In so far as it venerates the portrayal of those regions where speech silently yields to "pure feeling" and "pure act," contemporary aesthetics tends directly toward the religion of the play-actor. Moreover the religion of the player as pure gesticulator is quite definitely formulated nowadays: I have before me a passage in which a player is exalted for his "back" in a certain scene. Let us note, too, how dramatists are associating the player more and more deliberately with his effect on the public, and this as pure pantomimist. There was a man with an incredible capacity for contempt who was as bad a writer as he was a skilful dramatist. He never conceived a phrase without associating it mentally with the comedian who was to play it; he replaced the logic of the passions with the passions themselves, substituted gesture for discourse and thwacks for repartee. He was acclaimed not only by the pit but by what was supposed to be the most intelligent society. And his detractors imitated him.

The contemporary cult for elementary life, the scorn for life which has evolved, appears elsewhere, too. In their views of the living world, their "biological philosophy," the only life which interests them is elementary life, the life of protoplasm. To that life alone, although they do not think it necessary to warn us of this, apply all their definitions of life ("incessant change of direction," "incommensurability with ideas," etc). Life which tries to go be-

yond this moment, to stabilize change, to acquire consistency (the effort, for example, of an animal to become vertebrate) does not impress them; it seems to them to be a *defection* from life, a return to inert matter. (From this point of view nothing is more suggestive than a comparison between the biologic philosophy in vogue nowadays and that of Herbert Spencer favoured by our fathers. Creative Evolution sets the attribute of *mobility* in almost exclusive relief in the phenomena of life; in the Principles of Biology it was the attribute of *organization*.) Likewise they believe that only the *elementary and unorganized* facts of consciousness merit the *deliberate* attention of the psychologist and his exceptional methods ("overthrow of ordinary cognition," "catastrophe of Thought"). It seems that the most banal methods will suffice to comprehend the facts of a soul which has evolved, which functions through concepts—the activity of Descartes' spirit, for example, when it formed the idea of substance. But the most significant thing is, in their daily lives, in their worldly judgements, their supreme cult of mobile, impulsive, "living" people, their contempt for thoughtful people. (I say *contempt*; they are not considered boresome but *inferior*.) I know a young countess, the ornament of our salons, whose whole thinking is only an orgy of unconnected bounds, whose reasoning is a cyclone of impressions, her judgement a jumble of images; she gave a measure of her intellectual powers when she compared the profile of the illustrious wife of a poet to a fish-knife and one of the hirsutes of the Institute to a squirrel with list slippers. Society was not satisfied to love her and to entertain her like a child; she was discovered to be a human being superior to Newton.

This young countess sometimes makes one think of the passage in Proudhon:

"I have a little daughter, three years old, who is trying to find names for the things she sees and calls a corkscrew, *key to the bottle*; a lamp shade, *hat for the lamp*; the elephant at the Zoological Garden, *nose-foot*; an icicle, *stone of ice*; the teeth of her comb, *fingers of the comb*, and so on. That child has all the philosophy she will ever have and all that any woman can acquire by her own motion; approximations, analogies, false similes, drolleries; no definition, no analysis, no synthesis, not an adequate idea, not the shadow of a concept."

A systematic esteem for people because of their vivacity and not of their judgement is a quite recent thing in French society. It seems to have been unknown before the nineteenth century. Retz declares that Mme. de Chevreuse was the only person he ever saw in whom "vivacity took the place of judgement," and he does not appear excessively partial to this order of merit. Every one knows that Mlle. de Scudéry's portraits place justice of the intellect far above fancy, that she means to praise a woman by saying that "however prompt her imagination, it never anticipated her judgement." And let us meditate on the valuation shown in these lines:

"Her mind (the duchesse du Maine's) makes no use of turns or figures, nor of anything which can be called invention. Vividly struck by images, she renders them as a mirror reflects them, without adding, without omitting, without changing anything. So I have great pleasure in listening to her." (Mme. de Staal-Delaunay.)

Can anything distinguish the French society of other days from our own better than this eulogy of the objective spirit, written about one society woman by another?

DESIRE THAT ART SHOULD BE EXALTED— PERFECTION OF LYRIC MATERIAL

Another aspect of our contemporaries' desire to experience excitement through the products of the intellect is the extraordinary, the almost exclusive, taste they display for literature which is *exalted* or at least *pathetic*. We may say that with a very few exceptions (M. Anatole France is one and his fortunes have suffered for it) all the authors favoured by the public in the last twenty years—MM. Barrès, Maeterlinck, Romain Rolland, Suarès, Claudel, Péguy, Adam, L. Bertrand—are *vibrant* authors, most of them extremely keyed up in tone, constantly under pressure. It seems that temperate and reasonable writing has lost all aesthetic value in French society, a singular thing for the descendants of those who welcomed the writings of La Bruyère as we know they did, and called for eighteen editions of Montesquieu in two months. We wonder

where we could find to-day a woman in society who fancied she was humiliating an author by saying that "his clearness is that of lightning and his warmth that of fever," as Mme. du Deffand did of Rousseau. However, the most interesting thing is the veritable science shown by present-day society, using its writers as a medium, in perfecting the arsenal of literary exaltation and in multiplying tenfold this source of sensation.

To begin with they have furiously intensified the natural sources of lyricism, those from which it has flowed from the beginning and which De Bosseville, a romanticist, once enumerated with all desirable candour: love, religion, patriotism, melancholy. As for the lyricism of love, we need only refer to that of our "dionysians" to determine whether we have been able to coarsen it since the days when the *berquinades* of a Desbordes-Valmore were considered the last word in erethism. In religious lyrics let us admit that the ecstasies of a Lamartine are the orisons of a little girl in comparison with the "immolation in divinity" into which our people plunge with a Verlaine or the thunders of Jehovah which they brandish daily with a Claudel. The war songs of a Barbier, a Delavigne, even of a Déroulède? The blaring of a child's horn beside that fanfare of Gallicism, that ferreting out of the foreigner, sounded, at the hearthstone, with M. Rostand. Moreover the emotional power of patriotic lyricism has been multiplied a hundredfold by skilfully combining it with others which are not necessarily a part of it: the lyricism of race, of "keeping faith with the dead," of "national determination," together with historic romanticism. As for the lyricism of melancholy, it may be asserted that as a producer of voluptuous dissolution it is the invention of our time. What are the disenchantments—purely oratorical—of an Olympio, the purely plastic sorrows of a Chateaubriand, compared with these really extensive soul-states, these lassitudes inaccessible to all bracing, to all vertebration, in which our contemporaries are swooning with M. Barrès? What is the wholly linear, wholly conceptual cult of Death in Leopardi or Leconte de Lisle beside the intoxicating swoon of self, pure emotion free of all idea, which they savour in *La Mort de Venise* and which, fifty years ago, a moralist seemed to foretell in these words:

"Listen to wailing death, the priestess equivocal, vague and soft,

drifting on the stream of reveries, mingling with sorrow a something we love, sweet and holy tears, mourning? pleasure? we know not." (Michelet.)

The literature of death would seem to be a gift to France from our contemporaries.

They have also much intensified another traditional source of pathos: the lyricism of mystery. We may even say that they created it. Compare the two. There is the lyricism of mystery in our masters of 1830 for whom things are "mysterious" among a hundred other adjectives in the romantic bric-a-brac, almost automatically, as in Homer the dawn is always "rosy-fingered" and the counsels of Zeus "incorruptible." And there is the sombre insistence of our bards on deriving a quite special consciousness from this aspect of things, to such a point that sometimes (Maeterlinck) they devote whole works to it. Add to that their intention, greatly applauded by their public, of being interested exclusively in those aspects of nature which seem mysterious, their rejection as unworthy of interest of everything they can understand. In *Le Voyage de Sparte* one of their most faithful representatives says, "I throw away a book as soon as it has lost its mystery." They would certainly say, reversing a famous *mot*, "the only thing of which one grows tired right away is understanding." Let us note, in addition, the extraordinary extension of this field of lyricism; to the mysteries which satisfied our parents (love, women, children) they have added others no less moving: the mystery of race, of crowds, of animals, and we can not forget the more and more intense exploitation in literature of the Christian Mystery. But the most remarkable thing is their definite desire not that art give them the *idea* of mystery, but that it transport them into that state where, when all ideas vanish, they can rejoice with eyes half closed and lips half open, in the eternal unknowability of things. With Victor Hugo people wanted to speak of mystery; with Maeterlinck they want to swoon in it. One perceives the progress.

But the most significant thing in this whole affair is the creation of an entirely new and marvelously fecund source of lyricism: namely *moral*, or, perhaps better, *moralistic* lyricism. By a veritable stroke of genius they realized what an admirable chance for pathos lay in getting excited over some moral, political, or aes-

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thetic fashion, and they opened up for lyric exploitation the *idea of value* or primacy of one or another manner of living or feeling. At once they began to vibrate: with Nietzsche for the primacy of warlike morality; with M. Barrès for the primacy of the will; with M. Bourget for that of tradition; with M. Maurras for that of culture, of intellectual discipline, of reason; with M. Romain Rolland for that of non-culture and the spontaneous, and so on.

At the same time, and by another master stroke, it was decreed that the superiority of a moral or aesthetic fashion was not a demonstrable thing, but a thing felt and loved; that therefore, the apostle of a Value was not held to any proof, logic, or coherence. The door was thus opened to distracted prophecy (of which Péguy and Claudel are very good examples) to affirmations as peremptory as gratuitous, as strident as contradictory, a veritable catapult of words, of which societies most avid of sensation had never dreamed.

We say that they began to vibrate for the primacy of the reason. In effect one does not see why the love of Reason should not be a lyric theme as well as any other. It is clear that one can rest one's hand on the sword-hilt, assume a Castillian attitude, and pronounce the words, "I am a classicist"; like the hero of a contemporary novel who brandishes a chair over the cranium of his interlocutor, crying out, "I, monsieur, am a moderate republican." The romanticism of reason was indicated. It was only necessary to think of it.

However, let us note, apart from this taste for moralistic lyricism, a real *moralism*, a real absorption in the moral passions, among our contemporaries. Every one knows that the prattle of the boudoirs is nourished infinitely more by moral and political than by intellectual or literary discussions. Let us note above all a desire for gravity and dogmatism in the treatment of questions, a total rejection of lightness (in the best sense of the word). We have alluded (in *Les Sentiments de Critias*) to that author, eminently capable of wit as shown by the works of his youth, who has for twenty years denied himself a smile, never quitting the solemn, out of deference to the *beau monde*. It has not been sufficiently noted that long before 1914, when there was no sense of the gravity of the occasion, French society no longer understood irony.

Finally another stroke of genius in the same direction was the surrender to lyric exploitation of certain scientific and philosophic

ideas capable of lyric treatment, simplified, of course, and reduced to their bare elements, as is appropriate to the method. In this way Taine's idea of determinism was given over to literary exaltation, and especially racial determinism (lyricized by M. Barrès), the theory of the conservation of matter (lyrically treated under the name of the Eternal Recurrence by Nietzsche and M. Maeterlinck) the theory of biologic constants (Quinton), lyricized by M. Bourget, the theory of the unconscious (lyricized by M. Maeterlinck). This scientifico-philosophic lyricism is also an effect of the pretension always made by romanticism of being familiar with high abstract thinking and of protecting it. We know that as they embrace Siena and Grenada, our bards cheerfully quote Kant and Schleiermacher, thus satisfying those two desires whose synthesis characterizes democratic society: the first for emotion and for pedantry.

One result of this aesthetic has been that many a contemporary author has condemned himself to lyricism when his nature was anything but frenzied. "They all carry the thyrsis" says Plato, "but few are possessed by the God." So we have witnessed the birth of a castrated lyricism, a sort of saturnalia of institutors, of whom M. Romain Rolland is a good example. It is the story of Rollin at Capri. For the rest, in spite of their efforts, the critical spirit still clings to these Pindars of ours,

"Qui rampe dans sa fange et s'y croit ignoré."

Hasn't M. Paul Souday indicated, in the works of one of the most terrible bullies in this manner, certain bits (perhaps his best) which are pure criticism? Oh, pitiless analyst!

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Courtesy of Acton.

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MODERN FORMS

This department of The Dial is devoted to exposition and consideration of the less traditional types of art.

THE AMERICAN SHYNESS

BY HENRY McBRIDE

PAINTERS in America have grievous cause for quarrel with the writers of America and are strangely patient under it. I refer to the indifference of the writers to the studio output, an indifference so complete that it would be insolent were it not also weak. To be sure, Americans of all sorts are indifferent to this output but that only makes the crime of the writers—who have less excuse than our pork-packers for burying their talents in a napkin—the more aggravating.

A former generation fared better, and no more pleasing spectacle may be found by the American who loves to hope the best for his country than the spectacle of those two blithe spirits, Margaret Fuller and Ralph Waldo Emerson, bending ecstatically over portfolios of engravings and coming to naïve and altogether charming conclusions in regard to the Art of Flaxman, Raphael, and even, alas, Canova. Neither Margaret nor Ralph went very far—the latter's essay upon Art is as droll as possible to modern ears and imperishable for all that—but as far as they went they went with all their hearts and souls—and I for one love to think that those excursions of theirs to the Athenaeum had as much as anything to do with the general *élan* that finally presented Winslow Homer, Thomas Eakins, Jimmy Whistler, Sargent, and St. Gaudens to this public. For without a stir to the populace it is impossible to have geniuses, and what is a writer for if not to make a stir?

The direct occasion of these remarks is a reading of the Letters of Henry James, letters which reveal that writer to have been as mute in the presence of a good picture or a good building, as the least of his contemporaries. The "hyphenation" he underwent

at a tender age—or perhaps it was born in him—and his visits to Rome lead one unconsciously to expect a degree of at least inquiry upon his part. But—there was nothing doing in the line mentioned—or almost nothing. James saw Pope Clement VII and the estimable Cenci family in Rome but not Michelangelo; he saw Savonarola in Florence but not the equally worthy Peruzzi; and do you suppose, had he felt any ecstasies before works of art he would have blurted them out with the freedom of a Stendhal or a Shelley? Not he! It appears that in spite of the famous expatriation, he was too American for that.

Shelley in Rome said of Michelangelo's Bacchus:

"The countenance of this figure is a most revolting mistake of the spirit and meaning of Bacchus. It looks drunken, brutal, narrow-minded, and has an expression of dissoluteness the most revolting. . . . On the other hand, considered only as a piece of workmanship, it has many merits. The body is conceived with great energy and the manner in which the lines mingle into each other, of the highest boldness and truth. It wants unity as a work of art—as a representation of Bacchus it wants everything."

Bold of Shelley? H'mm, merely out-spoken. A Shelley has as much right to exist as a Michelangelo, and until he asserts that right he does not exist—as an artist. Stendhal wept with joy at the sight of a picture by Bronzino and was practically paralysed by one of the now obscure Volterrano's works. "*En sortant de Santa Croce*," said he, "*j'avais un battement de coeur, la vie était épuisée chez moi, je marchais avec la crainte de tomber.*" So remote are both Volterrano and Bronzino from the present stream of life that the travelled New Yorker would no sooner weep with them than with the latest young American actress portraying the woes of Medea—but how deliciously right it was of Stendhal to have wept! To be permanently right upon a question of taste is not obligatory upon writers, since no one is that, but it is in the highest degree important and perfectly simple and easy to be Stendhalian if one happens to be a Stendhal.

Henry James' nearest attempt at a *crise de nerfs* over art came when he sat for his portrait to Sargent, but he was as cautious as possible when approaching the emotion.

"It is, I infer, a very great success; a number of the competent and intelligent have seen it, and so pronounce it in the strongest terms. In short it seems likely to be one of S's fine things. . . . Of course I'm sitting a little askance in the chair. The canvas comes down to just where my watchchain (such as it is, poor thing!) is hung across the waistcoat; which latter, in itself, is found to be splendidly (poor thing though it also be) and most interestingly treated. Sargent *can* make such things so interesting—such things as my coat-lappet and shoulder and sleeve, too! But what is most interesting every one is agreed, is the mouth—than which even he has never painted a more living and, as I am told, 'expressive'!"

When told, you see, H. J. knew how good the portrait was. H. J., in fact, appeared to act appallingly under advisement in regard to the fine arts, and the only two other pronouncements of note in the two huge volumes of letters picture his wrath at the bombardment of Rheims Cathedral and his joy at the success of Gaudens' bronze relief to the memory of Colonel Robert Shaw for the Boston Common, both of them in sufficiently Jamesian accents though both as evidently "told to him." The edict against the Germans at Rheims would have brought joy to the hard-pressed newspaper correspondents of those days:

"But no words fill the abyss of it—nor touch it, nor relieve one's heart nor light by a spark the blackness; the ache of one's howl and the anguish of one's execration aren't mitigated by a shade, even as one brands it as the most hideous crime ever perpetrated against the mind of man. There it *was*—and now all the tears of rage of all the bereft millions and all the crowding curses of all the wandering ages will never bring it back!"

Which as passion is early-Florentine, but as art-stuff is nil. One touch of comprehension or attempt at comprehension of Rheims would have illuminated those blatant words like a torch. But perhaps it isn't fair to hold a mortal to account for war-talk. The only allowed war-talk is the manufactured article and the gist of this protest is against the manufactured.

Arthur B. Davies has secured as detached a position among the

artists of the day as may be imagined but seems to know how to unite this desirable detachment with prosperity. He is a poet—which is perhaps only another way of hinting at detachment from modern conditions—and has, during a career which now begins to have some length, been subjected to divers influences which have coloured but not changed his outlook upon life.

He began under the protection of William Blake, who gave Mr Davies titles if not essential ideas for many of the canvases that used to shock the hoi-polloi in the cellar gallery at Macbeth's years ago. It is difficult now to see why academicians should have been so scandalized by these innocent works which were undeniably pleasant in colour and playful in a Mozartian way with the development of the theme, but they were: and at any moment during the run of these exhibitions, sticklers for propriety could have been seen rushing from the gallery with eyeballs raised to heaven and waved arms protesting against contamination—much as later, the same individuals protested against cubism.

As it happened, Mr Davies himself, after having conquered the philistines simply by jingling a few coins in his pocket—it is odd but academicians do succumb to any art the moment they are convinced it sells (*par exemple*, Greco; all academicians love Greco!); as it happened, I say, after it became positively the fashion to admire Mr Davies' poetic canvases, he turned cubist!!

Gracious heavens, what a row was there! This time the situation was complicated by the fact that the artist's signature had a money value. Nice people now owned Davieses and nice people are never averse to seeing their possessions augment in selling power—but could nice people countenance a cubist? That was the rub. But just at the critical moment—Mr Davies always was a lucky creature—some of the best known cubists in America, driven to frenzy by the coin that still jingled in Mr D's pocket, united and cried with loud voice that that gentleman was not a cubist, not a real one at any rate.

Hearing these words, investors became reassured, and the before-cubism pictures are as much "in demand" in the Fifth Avenue shops as ever: and as no art row lasts for ever, the rival cubists seem to have forgiven Mr Davies his imposing clientele, and at present his prospects seem serene. He appears to be the most privileged character upon the native heath.

THREE POEMS

BY H. D.

HELIOS

Helios makes all things right—
night brands and chokes,
as if destruction broke
over furze and stone and crop
of myrtle-shoot and field-wort,
destroyed with flakes of iron,
the bracken-stems,
where tender roots were, sown
blight, chaff and waste
of darkness to choke and drown.

A curious god to find,
yet in the end faithful;
bitter, the Kyprian's feet—
ah, flecks of whited clay,
great hero, vaunted lord—
ah, petals, dust and windfall
on the ground—queen awaiting queen.

Better the weight, they tell,
the helmet's beaten shell,
Athene's riven steel,
caught over the white skull,
Athene sets to heel
the few who merit it.

Yet even then, what help,
should he not turn and note
the height of forehead and the seal of conquest,
drawn near, and try the helmet;
to lift—reset the crown

THREE POEMS

Athene weighted down,
or break with a light touch
mayhap the steel set to protect;
to slay or heal.

A treacherous god, they say,
yet who would wait to test
justice or worth or right,
when through a fetid night
is wafted faint and nearer—
then straight, as point of steel
to one who courts swift death,
scent of Hesperidean orange-spray.

PHAEDRA REMEMBERS CRETE

Think, O my soul,
of the red sand of Crete;
think of the earth, the heat
burnt fissure like the great
backs of the temple serpents;
think of the world you knew;
as the tide crept, the land
burned with a lizard-blue
where the dark sea met the sand.

Think, O my soul—
what power has struck you blind—
is there no desert root, no forest-berry,
pine-pitch or knot of fir
known that can help the soul
caught in a force, a power,
passionless, not its own?

*So I scatter, so implore
Gods of Crete, summoned before
with slighter craft;
ah, hear my prayer:*

*Grant to my soul
the body that it wore,
trained to your thought,
that kept and held your power,
as the petal of black power
the opiate of the flower.*

*For art undreamt in Crete,
strange art and dire,
in counter-charm prevents my charm,
limits my power:
pine-cones I heap
grant answer to my prayer.*

No more, my soul—
as the black cup, sullen and dark with fire,
burns till beside it, noon's bright heat
is withered, filled with dust,
and into that noon-heat
grown drab and stale,
is sudden sound of thunder and swift rain,
till the scarlet flower is wrecked
in the slash of the white hail.

The poppy that my soul was,
formed to bind all mortals,
made to strike and gather hearts
like flame upon an altar,
fades and shrinks, a red leaf—
waste and drift of the cold rain.

PHAEDRA REBUKES HIPPOLYTA

Swift and a broken rock
clatters across the steep shelf
of the mountain-slope,
sudden and swift,
and breaks as it clatters down
into the hollow breach
of the dried water-course;
far and away
(through fire, I see it,
and smoke of the dead, withered stalks
of the wild cistus-brush)
Hippolyta, frail and wild,
galloping up the slope
between great boulders
and shelves and circles of rock.

I see it, sharp, this vision,
and each fleck on the horse's flanks
of foam, the bridle and bit,
the silver—the reins,
held fast with perfect art,
the sun, striking athwart
the silver work,
the neck, strained forward, ears alert,
and the head of the girl
flung back and her throat.

*Ah, burn my fire, I ask
out of the smoke-ringed darkness
enclosing the flaming disk
of my vision—
I ask for a voice—an answer—
was she chaste?*

Who can say,
the broken ridge of the hills

was the line of a lover's shoulder,
his arm-turn, the path to the hills,
the sudden leap and swift thunder
of mountain-boulders, his laugh.

She was mad—
as no priest, no lovers' cult
could grant madness;
the wine that entered her heart
with the touch of the mountain-rocks
was white, intoxicant:
she, the lithe and remote,
was betrayed by the glint
of light on the hills,
the granite splinters of rock,
the touch of the stone
where heat melts
toward the shadow-side of the rocks.

CASE: MALLARMÉ

BY FERNAND DIVOIRE

MALLARMÉ: Is surrounded by friends. His friends like him very much; when he shows them his verse they think him a lunatic. Catulle Mendès so informed me, and he was very fond of Mallarmé; he thought him a charming fellow.

Next: some people begin to admire Mallarmé's verse. They become Disciples. That is to say: they become disciples of a certain type of verse.

If Mallarmé then wishes to make other verses, he must find new disciples for this new form. Otherwise the people about him who have taken the name Mallarmists, and who would have liked to imprison the poet in a section of himself, will do their best to prevent his evolution; to prevent his emerging from the Mallarmism with which they are already acquainted.

If their idol commits a work which projects beyond the form which they already admire; they will not merely cease to be interested, not merely refrain from an interest in this work; on the contrary, they will try to get it into the frame of their cult—or they will veil a modest mysteriousness.

Thus one might see part of an artist's work discipleless until long after his death.

Imagine the author of *Un coup de dé* living in our time. We should expect him really to produce poetic *symphonies* rich in sonorities and with distinct architectonic form; symphonies which would have routed the Mallarméens of 1880.

Mallarmé came to the threshold of this art. He saw over the threshold. But all his age, all his surroundings, every thing that he had formed, combined together to prevent him from incubating the egg he held in his hand. The *Coup de dé* was forty years beyond the time in which it was written. It comes to us young with all the future it contained, weighted with the defects of the time in which it was put together.

If there is among us any one who can shed his friends and disciples three times running.

Gain: $40 \times 3 =$ years 120.



THE CONDUCTOR. BY WILLIAM GROPPER



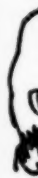


A BEGGAR. BY WILLIAM GROPPER





POLITICAL CHARACTERS. BY WILLIAM GROPPER.





SECOND-HAND ROMANCE. BY WILLIAM GROPPER

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THE ISLAND OF PARIS: A LETTER

October, 1920

UNDISTURBED by any of the matters dealt with in my last letter, Guy Charles Cros continues his vitreous and impeccable versification:

*"Je suis seul au milieu de tout comme une pierre au milieu du
courant
qui ne bouge ni à droite ni à gauche et qui reste là cent ans;*

*une pierre au milieu de l'eau, de l'eau qui tremble et qui frissonne.
Je n'ai rien qui soit à moi et je ne suis à personne.*

*Etre tout seul, seul à jamais, le reconnaître et le savoir,
est-il un rêve qui vaille cette certitude sans espoir?*

*L'eau qui coule sans remous est lente et profonde.—
Ai-je cru un seul instant à la réalité du monde?"*

There is the authentic voice, fashions divide and go by. Ten years ago Cros' first book brought us the evidence of his existence: a man who would not tell lies or make pretence of possessing emotions not in him. Here in his later work is the superb sense of a writer who knows that enough is enough and who understands how small a thing can uphold eternity; that a painting is not estimated by its acreage.

Two interesting books of verse have already come from La Belle Edition, where François Bernouard is reviving the art of steel colour engraving.

They are *Quelques poèmes des saisons* by Vanderpyl, possessing in no small degree the qualities usually ascribed too exclusively to his friend, once of L'Abbaye, Charles Vildrac.

*"Etre fort, c'est à peu près
tout ce que je veux être;*

*être bonne est à peu près
tout ce qu'elle veut être:
qui de nous aura raison
au temps rouge des moissons?"*

(Vanderpyl)

His ally Marville has an equal simplicity in Kou-Singa, Vanderpyl's hearth is as simply presented as Marville's African coasts and backwaters:

*"Des brumes sont sur le fleuve
au-dessus des Rapides.
Les monts sont loin,
les monts sont bleus
et gris.
Kaï! Kaï sur l'eau
couleur de ciel
où pleut des gouttes
de lumière.
Le courant fuit
sous la pirogue
avec un frisson d'étoffe froissée."*

(Marville)

The droll morgue of Maurice Vlaminck shows in the poems printed in Action (No. 4). So far as it lies within me I do not praise men's writing merely because I happen personally to like the authors themselves, and I have, I think, reasonably praised work and "put up with" various inconveniences from "creators" whom I have not especially liked.

Yet it may pass for legitimate that a man's personality should reinforce one's judgement, and make one ready to take risks of expression. And for what it may add or detract, I may as well set it down in black and white that Vlaminck is one of the finest things, humanly speaking, that I have seen during two visits to Paris: this huge bulk, like a piano-mover with leanings toward the prize-ring; this basis for Vanderpyl's thundering and oft tub-thumped dictum that "a painter, thunder of the thunders of god, is a great stupid brute sweating paint."

And of the other fine human objects is Fritz Vanderpyl himself,

perched reading on his balcony, his head like a round dreaming cannon-ball atop the stubby structure of his person; "obèse" as the foreign legion discovered him to be after months of quandary as how to feed him to cannon. And they took him out because he was too "obèse" to fit into the active army.

And perhaps my richest half hour of the two visits: in Vlaminck's studio: Vlaminck impassive, presenting the company with the seat of his breeches, enormous, like the gable end of a barn; Cros, as usual, quiet as brook water moving over a smooth-sanded bottom and Vanderpyl booming and crackling "thunder of the thunders of god." (This is not translated verbatim.)

All of which means that I don't ask any one to take my word for this part of my essay, if the verse doesn't bear out my statements; if the sense isn't there in Vlaminck's verses: (Action, edited by Florent Fels, 18 rue Feydeau).

*"Quand Jean Pierre Marie
Fils de Marie Jean Jules Pierre
Vint au monde
Il comprit qu'en somme
C'était une mauvaise affaire
On l'avait invité
Sans lui mettre son couvert.
Sa mère était pauvre,
Son père était décédé
Sans rien lui laisser."*

Or of Jean-Jules-Marie Pierre

*". . . Il dit: j'ai de quoi payer!
Entra dans un bistro
Où mangeaint des cochers
Et dégusta du gigot.
En appelant le patron
Il cria: l'addition!
Fier,
Sur le zinc,
Il posa sa croix de guerre,
En pensant: ça vaut beaucoup!*

*Le patron le regarda de travers:
 —Cette monnaie là, dit-il,
 Ne vaut plus rien du tout,
 La guerre est finie!
 Ça passe pour cette fois-ci
 Mais ne reviens pas ici!
 Et il ajouta d'un air bonasse:
 —Qu'est-ce que tu veux que j'en fasse!"*

Or Marie:

*"Elle était coquette et pas belle
 Elle s'appelait Marie
 Comme la Vierge et les bonnes.
 Les bonnes s'appellent Marie
 La Vierge aussi.
 Elle était coquette et pas belle.
 Son père était tourneur
 Il était mort à la peine
 Avant la journée de huit heures.
 Sa mère faisait les ménages
 Marie ne pensait qu'à l'amour
 Toujours.
 Ça devait finir très mal pour elle
 Elle était coquette et pas belle.
 Un matin je l'ai recontrée
 Elle avait beaucoup de chagrin,
 Elle était enceinte d'un Américain
 Qui reprenait le train."*

Five lines of Vlaminck are worth all the forty volumes of Barrès; all the rhetoric that has been spouted during the past six years; all the official publications about the "land fit for heroes" and the safe place for democracy. They have, beyond this, a *robustezza* and they make a music for singing.

EZRA POUND

BOOK REVIEWS

AN ARISTO-DEMOCRAT

MY DIARIES. *By Wilfrid Scawen Blunt. Part One, 1917. Part Two, 1920. 8vo. 1023 pages. Martin Secker. London.*

THE Education of Henry Adams has found its counterpart in England in the Diaries of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, of which the second and concluding part appeared this year. Both Adams and Blunt belonged to the patrician class, and both were compelled to live in a democratic world which they distrusted and despised. Both were born to the amplest opportunities which Anglo-Saxon civilization offers. Both served an apprenticeship in practical life long enough to gain a knowledge of the machinery of the modern world, and to surround themselves with a circle of active spirits from whom they drew a constant stream of confidential information as to the manipulators of that machinery and the forces which impelled them. Both were cosmopolitan, at home in the society of the capitals of the world. Both had an extraordinary experience of modern life, and both kept a spiritual aloofness from it that enabled them to look before and after. Both were intensely curious about the detail of life of their contemporaries, but both were fundamentally concerned with the eternal question of the world, *Quo Vadis*. Adams gave to his experience a plot or pattern by applying, half humorously, the formula of an inquiry into its value in terms of the education of the individual. Blunt has left his in the raw material of personal narrative, conversations, reports, comment. The advantage of form is with the American, and his book will remain one of the great autobiographies of the world with the Confessions of Saint Augustine, Benvenuto Cellini, and Rousseau. On the other hand, Wilfrid Blunt, it may be prophesied, will be reckoned among the great observers of times and the affairs of men—with Saint-Simon, Horace Walpole, and Crabbe Robinson.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt has recently celebrated his eightieth birth-

day. He was born three years after the accession of Victoria. Educated at a Roman Catholic School, he seems to have imbibed something of the errant chivalry which survives among old Catholic families—the Howards and the Digbys. His initiation into life, like Adams', came through diplomacy. He was attaché at Frankfurt, Madrid, Paris, Athens, and other places, and he lived more widely and intensely than his American counterpart. No one can doubt it who has read the *Love Sonnets of Proteus* by which he is chiefly known, at least to the generation that was at college in the eighties. Love and poetry were not his only avocations; he speaks of copying Velasquez while at Madrid. At thirty he married and settled on his estate, Crabbett, in Sussex, which became the annual meeting place of a group of *les jeunes*, the Crabbett Club, whose names recall the hopes and failures of the late Victorian age—George Curzon, Harry Cust, Lord Crewe, Frederick Locker, Alfred Douglas, George Wyndham, Loulou Harcourt—and, "on a single occasion," Oscar Wilde. His political ambition was wrecked by an act of sheer Quixotism. He threw himself into the Irish cause which was then in the phase of the Land War, and expiated his sedition by a year in Kilmainham jail. On his return he found himself estranged, as he says, "from most of my personal friends, my blood relations and those I loved best." His patrician prejudices were "shocked by the incongruity of being met at my door on my return from Kilmainham by a deputation consisting of three Irish M.P.'s and Langridge, our local cobbler and only Radical." Henceforth he realized "the full nakedness of the land on any lines but those of silence and abstention." "I resolved to look no more to action at home but to seek in other ways what I still felt to be my mission in life, that of pleading the cause of the backward nations of the world, and especially those of Asia and Africa, from their slavery to Europe." It is at this point, 1888, that *My Diaries* begin.

Already Blunt had become interested in the imperial questions of English control of India, and especially Egypt. He was a strong supporter of Egyptian nationalism, a friend of Arabi Pasha, and a bitter critic and foe of the English occupation. He had an estate near Cairo, at which for many years he spent the winter, in close communication with Egyptians of all parties—the Khedive, the Grand Mufti, Zaghloul, and other leaders of the nation—and a

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sharp thorn in the flesh of Lord Cromer. In England he acted as a sort of unofficial ambassador of Egypt, and fought in the press a weary and losing fight against the greed of the few and the indifference of the many which combine to make up public opinion. What discouraged him most—what tears the heart out of every sincere fighter for national morality—was the fact that peoples have no conscience, that for nations there is no repentance. On July 11, 1912, he records: "Anniversary of the bombardment of Alexandria thirty years to-day, and there is no sign of repentance in this country. I am the only person left who remembers that abominable event and who still protests."

His sympathy extended to all subject peoples; he judged white civilization by one standard, its treatment of the black, brown, yellow races; and he looked at international politics chiefly from this point of view. He lost faith in the Arbitration and Peace Society for the same reason that others have lost faith in The League of Nations:

"I found the ideas of the Society would be of no profit if realized to the backward races of mankind, or to prevent wars by white men against them, whereas a general war in Europe might possibly give them a time of peace on the principle that when thieves fall out honest men come by their own."

He looked hopefully to a general war between the Dutch and English in South Africa as likely to "alleviate the condition of the only people whose interests I really care for in the quarrel, namely, the blacks." He found hope for Islam in the alliance between Germany and Turkey. He condemned John Redmond's leadership of the Irish party in Parliament for "abandoning the cause of India, Persia, and Egypt, and backing up Grey and the Whigs in all their iniquitous doings abroad in payment for Irish Home Rule." And on the rumour that the Pope was supporting the atrocious Italian campaign in Tripoli he pronounced solemn anathema. "If true, I can only say what I have never in my life said, or thought to say, 'To Hell with the Pope.'"

With this fundamental attitude it was natural that Blunt should be a pronounced anti-imperialist, a Little-Englander. Whenever the British Empire was in question he was a thorough defeatist.

Speaking of Rosebery's scheme for the partition of the Ottoman Empire he hoped "that under Providence it may result in the partition of that other Empire for the sake of which we in England have sold our old principles of freedom and respect for International right." He looked upon the Boer War as the "first nail driven into the coffin of the British Empire." He sent £ 50 to the Stop-the-War Committee with reluctance because "if the war goes on another six months it really may smash up the British Empire." He exulted in the Boer victories as "every honest man, English or not, would rejoice." He held, on the other hand, that "the British Empire is the great engine of evil for the weak races now existing in the world," because though other nations "do harm in the world they are not able to do it so effectively as we do through their lack of those qualities that make of Englishmen an administrative race." And on the other hand, he saw the decay of British national character under the "gangrene of empire." There was the crass stupidity which finds in bloodshed the great engine of administration, as witness the conversation between Winston Churchill and Moore, the premier of Natal, apropos of India—with its ghastly prophecy of Amritsar.

"Well, Churchill, I suppose you'll have to bleed them soon; there's nothing like it. Next time they have a demonstration ride them down, and if that isn't enough pour in a volley. You'll bleed a few thousands of them, but it will be better for them in the long run; there's nothing like bleeding."

And there was the ghastly hypocrisy that permitted the extermination of the blacks of South Africa while holding meetings to denounce the Sultan for destroying the Armenians. "Was there ever a nation like ours? Never, since the world began." He found comfort in Herbert Spencer's acquiescence in his opinion that "it would need a foreign army landed on our shores to bring us quite to our sober senses."

It was not because of lack of pride in his race that Blunt flouted the empire. He never repudiated the sonnet on Gibraltar—that thrilling call of national glory, to find the like of which we must go back to the Elizabethans:

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"Ay, this is the famed rock which Hercules
 And Goth and Moor bequeath'd us; at this door
 England stands sentry. God! to hear the shrill
 Sweet treble of her fifes upon the breeze,
 And at the summons of the rock gun's roar
 To see her red coats marching from the hill."

It was because he was by inheritance an Englishman of Englishmen, Pharisee of the Pharisees, that like St Paul he repudiated the false pride of his race. To him "the Empire is a poor cockney affair invented hardly twenty years ago"; and he declared "I am myself the extremest of all possible Little-Englanders and would cheerfully return to the 'spacious' days of Queen Elizabeth when we held not a foot of land outside the kingdom."

It was with a quite peculiar horror that he saw the example of England finding an imitator in America. When McKinley's ultimatum made certain the war with Spain he "hopes that Spain may be able to hold her own, not that Cuban independence lacks my sympathy but because between Spain and the United States I am obliged to be on the side of the older and more barbarous country. The Yankees as the coming race of the world would be worse even than ourselves."

In spite of his defeatist attitude on every question of foreign or imperial affairs for forty years Blunt retained the personal friendship of many of his class. Through them he was able to help, in small ways, Indian, Egyptian, Irish, and other victims of imperial rapacity, and through them he had an unexampled knowledge of what was going on in the world. With Sir William Vernon Harcourt, George Wyndham, and later Winston Churchill his relations were particularly close. He saw much of Hilaire Belloc, Henry Labouchère, Frederic Harrison, and other keen observers of public affairs. Lady Galloway, sister of Lord Salisbury, and Margot Tennant were his friends and gossips. He had known the capitals of Europe during his diplomatic apprenticeship, and year by year on his way to Cairo he visited the Duc de Wagram at Gros Bois. From his residence in Egypt he was in contact with the Moslem world, not only on the surface which it turns to Europe, but in its inner mysterious depths. He visited the Bedouin tribes of the desert, and made one journey of extreme interest to Siwah to gain

direct knowledge of the Senussis, the primitive sect from which may come the regeneration and rehabilitation of Islam. Altogether his range of interest was enormous, and his opportunities commensurate with it.

Not only in politics and foreign affairs but also in sport, society, art, poetry, science, and religion Blunt followed the currents of his time with undiminished zest. His innate chivalry is perhaps symbolized in his love of horses. He established a stud of Arabians at Crabbett, where each year he held an auction that became a public event. He recalled a day's hunting or a coaching party with the gusto of Squire Western. He enjoyed lunching with Margot Tennant, and hearing the latest gossip of the Souls. He wrote a play for Lady Gregory's theatre. He followed the Modernist Movement in the Catholic Church, the excommunication of St George Mivart, and the career of Father Tyrrell to his death. Through his friendship with Wilfrid Meynell he had Francis Thompson as his guest, and has given an unrivalled account of that mysterious personality. "He has the smallest head and face of any grown man I ever saw, colourless, except for his sharp nose where all light is concentrated, and his bright eyes. It is the face of a Spanish sixteenth century Saint, almost that of a dying child." He adds, by a happy touch, that though Thompson knew nothing of nature he recognized one flower. "'Ah that's a poppy' he cried, as if greeting a friend." Equally unforgettable are his recollections of the last days of Cardinal Newman, of Herbert Spencer, and William Morris—"really our greatest man."

Superficially the chief interest of *My Diaries* is doubtless in the secret histories of which Blunt's indefatigable curiosity made him master. Certain venerable shams he took an eager delight in demolishing. There is George Leveson Gower's refutation of the myth that Lord Cardigan led the charge at Balaclava—"Cardigan being at the time, on board his yacht, and only arrived on the field of battle as his regiment was on its way back from the Valley of Death." Certain obnoxious matters like the desecration of the Mahdi's tomb at Omdurman and the Jameson Raid turn up again and again as Blunt collected details and extended his sources of information. The story of the Raid told by the brother of one of the participants represents it as a "regular drunken frolic" with an amusing side. "Jameson had told off three men to cut the telegraph

wires, but they were in such a condition that they mistook a barbed wire fence for the telegraph and cut off a hundred yards of it and carefully buried it instead of the other." There is exquisite malice in his preservation of Lady Tennant's reminiscence of Gladstone's grandfather, a baker who spelled his name Gladstanes, and was locally known as "licht bap" on account of selling his loaves at short weight. There is a touch of the *splendeurs et misères des cardinaux* in the account of the way in which Bishop Vaughan (now cardinal) coerced Manning, who had no immediate intention of dying, into receiving the last rites for a dying archbishop. There is Gallic pungency in the anecdote of Carolus-Duran who explained that though not an ascetic he no longer made declarations of love at fifty-four. "Out of timidity?" asked Lady Castletown. "Non," he answered "*c'est par pudeur*."

Blunt's judgements of his contemporaries were coloured by his prejudices. Between Liberals and Tories he saw little difference except that "while both rob with the cry of 'your money or your life' the Liberals would like the money given up peaceably, the others after a fight." Still, on the whole he preferred the Tories as being less tainted by hypocrisy. Gladstone, Rosebery, Morley, Dilke, he blamed for their weakness; Salisbury, Chamberlain, and Balfour for their cynicism. He gives an illuminating contrast between Balfour and Asquith as drawn by Winston Churchill. "He [Asquith] is simple-minded and good. Arthur, on the contrary, is in his nature hard; he could be cruel. The difference between him and Arthur is that Arthur is wicked and moral, Asquith is good and immoral." Churchill's final summing-up of Balfour is singularly just. "He takes too scientific a view of politics. He knows that there has been an ice age and that there will some day be an ice age again." There follows in the same conservation an amusing account of the collapse of Asquith under the temptations of London society, and his rehabilitation by the Lloyd George Budget, which "put a stop to his social career."

For the professed empire builders Blunt had only bitter words. Stanley he cited as an example of degradation of character like that pictured by Conrad in *The Heart of Darkness*. Cecil Rhodes he thought a lucky gambler who "after a series of gross blunders was unscrupulous enough to save most of his own money at the expense of a war and ruin for everyone else." He noted curtly in

1911, "The birthday honour list gives Jameson a baronetcy who ought to have had a rope." Roosevelt on the occasion of his Cairo speech he marked as "a buffoon of the lowest American type—a kind of mad dog roaming about the world."

The characters for whom Blunt felt most sympathetic appreciation were Father Tyrrell, William Morris, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, uncompromising upholders of lost causes, and especially the group of younger men in Parliament, George Wyndham, Winston Churchill, Harry Cust, Loulou Harcourt, aristocrats like himself whom he felt at times that he had almost persuaded to adopt his own generous view of imperial renunciation and to "stand out for justice" to India, Egypt, Ireland. Alas! They were all bound to the infernal machinery of politics, swept on by the momentum of a popular tide as impossible to stem as the flight of the Tartars. How clearly they understood the nature of the problem is shown by a conversation with George Wyndham in 1909.

"He is inclined to agree with me that England would be better without her Indian Empire. In old times, when England was governed by an oligarchy, the administration of India might have been gradually transferred to the natives—but not now. A Minister purposing to do so could not remain a month in office. This of course, is true, but it is the same thing as admitting what Gordon said, that no reform was possible in India except by a revolution."

An aristocrat in a democratic world—this is Blunt's final judgement of himself. He saw in this fact his likeness to Gobineau, who was like himself "an orientalist out of harmony with received oriental ideas, a poet who was never popular, and an artist who was never more than an amateur." And he read clearly his failure in the cause to which he had given his life. In vain were generosity, courage, pity, loyalty, honour, all the virtues of that chivalry which Blunt inherited and professed, in a blind, hypocritical, selfish, predatory, democratic world. As the shadows gathered about him in 1913 he wrote:

"I am alone just now here, and in this dark world I am overwhelmed with woe—I realize how little I have accomplished, how little I have affected the thought of my generation in spite, as I am

still convinced, of the soundness of my view of things, and of some skill and courage in expounding it. I have made almost no converts in Europe, and am without a single disciple at home to continue my teaching after I am dead. Even in the East, though my ideas are bearing fruit and will one day be justified in act, I have founded no personal school where my name has authority."

One final blow was reserved for him, the catastrophe of 1914, which showed finally and incontestably the world in the colours in which Blunt had so long seen it. About the war he could have no illusions. His information on this point as on others was from first hand sources.

"The real cause of our quarrel with Germany I well knew was no more honourable a one than that of our dread of a too powerful commercial rival and the fear of Kaiser Wilhelm's forcing France, if we stood aside, into commercial alliance with him against us in the markets of the world . . . In this madness I would take no part. That these were the true causes of the war and not the pretended altruistic ones I have since acquired a certain knowledge from one of its chief promoters."

Here end My Diaries. What else is there to record save that the Great War was not the cleansing which Wilfrid Blunt had sometimes hoped it would be, that the demon by which the world was possessed, and which rent and tore it, was not cast out, but has taken seven devils worse than itself to enter in the name of peace, so that the last estate of that world is worse than the first?

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

PRIMITIVE HUMANITY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

PRIMITIVE SOCIETY. *By Robert H. Lowie. 12mo. 463 pages. Boni and Liveright. New York.*

HOW exhilarating are the words "primitive man!" The natural man, free from the fine-spun intellectual entanglements and the deadening inhibitions of a maturer, sadder world, the man bent on the satisfaction of every clean, strong-flowing impulse—savage, if you like, cruel, perhaps gloriously run amok! What of that, if only he be free, if only he breathe? Or, if this rhapsodical prelude suit not the reader's temperament, how depressing, dark, sinister are the words "primitive man!" For do not evolutionary anthropology and social psychology, double-headed Cerberus to the study of man, teach us that the individual is as naught in the pristine strata of human society, that he is but the unresisting sport of such tyrannical social compulsions as we of the mild to-day hardly dream of, that he and his society are but a drop in the powerful current of evolutionary law that does duty for man's earliest history? Here are two splendid superstitions for a critic's lance. Of course field ethnologists, Indian agents, and artists resident in Tahiti have long known that savages are very mild-mannered, comfortable people indeed. To be sure, one might have his skull broken in by a spiked club. This is not nice. But, then, there is such a thing as getting caught and mangled to death in the running gear of a machine, or getting yourself incarcerated in an evil-smelling "institution" for any one of several thousand reasons. Even European wars are known to happen.

Were it not for science, we should have naïvely supposed that there was no such thing as "primitive" man in the sense of a fundamentally distinct psychological variety of this animal species. We would still have recognized, of course, that the specific patterns of social life, the concrete cultural elements that fashion the warp and woof of daily living, the extent to which effective scientific knowledge has been gained and utilized by the social group—that all these differ enormously as we pass from civilized to primitive societies. But do they not differ just as truly, in however less

degree, as we pass from Zion, Illinois, to New York, and from New York to Peking—nay, from Chelsea to the Back Bay precincts? What need had we of positing a specifically primitive mentality, a peculiar mode of apprehending the universe, a radically distinct type of behaviour? As I have indicated, anthropological science would not have it so. Evolution was in the air. Everybody felt that it would be perfectly splendid if we could find a primitive stage of thought from which we had "evolved." Perhaps we could even find stages and play the game of the stratigraphic geologist. Of course we could not get hold of "primitive" man in the chronological sense of the term. Of his mentality we knew rather less than of the introspective psychology of the anthropoid apes. But there was nothing to prevent our identifying this hoary primitive with his present-day "survivals." We could study or theorize about the South-African Bushman, the Andaman Islander, and the Eskimo, and in this easy and thoroughly scientific manner we could gradually build a really dignified structure of evolutionary social law. The classical school of anthropology grew up and alternately bewildered and delighted a public that was at first inclined to be a little skeptical but that is now so accustomed to the idea of archaic stages of human psychology and of correlated stages of social evolution that the new variety of the game known as the Freudian interpretation of primitive custom is played with quite becoming seriousness. Laws of social psychology and evolutionary schemes have been desperately hard at work. Rousseau's state of nature, with which we could at least sympathize most pleasantly, has been snowed under by a perfect fury of strange forces, with the strangest, the most unlooked for consequences in their wake. Primitive man became painfully unfamiliar and aloof, with a maddening Frankenstein-like tendency to play the ghost of civilized humanity's regrettable past.

Things finally came to such a pass that certain anthropologists grew nervous—especially such as had seen primitive man from a closer vantage-point than the ivied seclusion of Oxford. They set about the task of testing out the laws. At first they made humble suggestions for revision, then they questioned the validity of the particular laws that had been "discovered" from time to time, now they are actually going to the length of denying the possibility of arriving at any laws, psychological or evolutionary, that would ex-

plain primitive culture. For the culture of a primitive people, they tell us, is a historical datum, a thing of time, of place, of contiguity, of that divine accident that results from the intertwining of thousands of antecedent factors that are themselves of time, of place, of contiguity, of that divine accident . . . In short, primitive culture is history, and history knows no laws that are not either irrelevant platitudes or myths. And this, as I understand Primitive Society, is where Dr Lowie stands. His book brushes away, not captiously but with all the sweeping power of theoretical argument and accumulation of descriptive fact, the whole cobweb screen of anthropological law. Primitive humanity now stands revealed as what we had always sneakily felt it was—simply ourselves, caught in the net of other geographical and historical circumstances. Its psychology is our psychology, no more archaic and no less variable. And, furthermore, neither its psychology nor our psychology nor any psychology "explains" just that grandiose pageant in the sequence of things that we call the history of man, any more than all the laws of physics and chemistry "explain" just what takes place in the woods of Quebec on a certain day in June, 1920. Anthropology, to put it technically, is not a conceptualizing "science," it is merely (but why "merely"?) a conveniently abbreviated record of what really takes place and has taken place in more or less arbitrarily selected societies. The principle of selection is of no philosophic profundity. Anthropology merely treats those societies that are not sophisticated enough to have drawn the specialized attention of local students of culture history, such, say, as study the Renaissance or classical Greece. If the horrified reader, loving his neatly labelled sciences, thinks this too flippant a characterization, let him set to and find a better.

The principle of selection being essentially arbitrary and quantitative, it follows that "primitive man" is no absolutely valid, historic concept. There is this "primitive" society and there is that one, and the only real justification for grouping them at all would be a possible historical connection that research may establish to have obtained between them. Failing this, they are to be studied as utterly distinct historic entities. But the historical connection referred to is of course equally possible between a civilized society and a primitive one. This means that, historically considered, the line of demarcation running between, say, European civilized soci-

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eties and African primitive societies on the one hand and aboriginal American societies on the other may be of antecedent importance to that which separates the two Old World groups of societies. The theoretical instance is here also an actual one. Europe and Africa share a host of cultural features—the iron-smith's art, the cultivation of certain cereals, the tendency to monarchy, the development of elaborate judicial procedure, the proverb and the narrative with a moral point, stringed instruments—which are unknown in aboriginal America. It is safe to say that as our study of primitive societies becomes more clearly animated by the historical point of view, the very notion of "primitive societies" as such will be abandoned as but a temporarily convenient *omnium gatherum*. Social psychology may go blithely forward, but it need have no expectation of getting anything of exclusive significance out of the doings of primitive folk.

As one passes, in Dr Lowie's reviews of the parallel or contrasting features in the social organizations of various primitive communities, from continent to continent and from tribe to tribe, one gets a cumulative sense of the essential effectiveness of human life at any level of sophistication. Primitive folk suffer from no greater handicaps than their "more fortunate" brethren of civilized communities. What they actually possess and enjoy in the way of cultural goods is a thousandfold surrogate for what they have not and have never heard of. If they have no alphabet, they have impassioned oratory and orally transmitted folk-literature none the less. If they have not the steamboat, they have some other way of getting down stream or over to a distant island, and once there, they are pretty certain to engage in some activity that is culturally at least as significant as the pursuits of excursionists or business agents. There is no sentimentality in all this. The layman does not begin to grasp to what an extent any society is moulded by historical inertia, by conventions. There is not a feature in primitive society, be it human sacrifice or cannibalism, that can not be shown by historical analysis to be a perfectly intelligible phenomenon, that may not in the consciousness of the folk be raised to the status of a rigid necessity, an ideal.

The insight into primitive societies thus gained reacts, it goes without saying, on our evaluation of the fundamental elements in our own culture. Here also the ways are thick-strewn with

convention. There is barely an institution, a usage, a belief, an ideal that has not about it the stigmata of convention, of historic accident. A moderately well-read student of comparative culture could suggest a dozen satisfactory alternates for any of them. It makes little difference how necessary we feel them to be, how unthinkable we regard their absence. Such a book as *Primitive Society* opens our eyes, if only by implication, to the overwhelmingly "artificial" cast of our lives; it does much to dispel our secure rationalism about ourselves and our institutions. Nothing can be taken for granted. If anthropology shows the most absurd of beliefs, the most revolting of practices, to have an explicable historical background, to form part and parcel of the unquestioned cultural legacy of those very estimable people who hold such beliefs and practise such enormities, if, in other words, to the anthropologist's eye they assume a cultural dignity comparable to the beliefs and practices of civilized communities, it conversely enables us to see as "primitive," as irrational and halting, hundreds of warmly cherished elements in our own social lives. It is all a matter of point of view. The important thing to remember is always this—that there is no psychological necessity about any of these cultural features, whether we find them in primitive societies or in our own levels. The psychological necessities of man are capable of an infinitely multiform solution. The truth is that culture is not a psychologically determined response to the basic needs of life, it is something much more elusive and satisfying than that. It is the fine art of living, enshrined in the heritage of generation to generation.

There is something ironical about the history of anthropological points of view. The early anthropologists, adopting psychological determinism and evolution as their guiding principles, were distrusted by the conservative historians of their day. These were regarded, by way of return of the compliment, as moss-backs incapable of assimilating the powerful methods that biological evolution was opening up. If an Egyptologist hesitated to label as totemic survivals the peculiar animal cults of ancient Egypt, he was likely to be accused of hopeless unfamiliarity with the new historical methods and interpretations due to anthropology. Now historians and sociologists have become pretty thoroughly anthropologized. Every sociological whipper-snapper bandies about the

clan and the totem. Unfortunately for the camp-followers of anthropology, anthropology itself is now elaborately backwatering. It is itself rapidly drifting to the anti-evolutionary, historical method that it at one time affected to despise as an amateurish plaything. Of course the circle is not a closed one. The course traversed by anthropology may more aptly be described as one upward turn of a spiral staircase. Anthropology is back with history, but the constant preoccupation with large issues and comparative data has given it a perspective and a technique that it could never have gained from the old history.

Dr Lowie's book may be recommended as the most informative, lucid, and keenly critical introduction to the study of primitive social organizations that the reviewer is aware of. It deserves the most careful study. Fortunately for the non-professional reader, *Primitive Society* is an eminently readable book. The style is crisp and rapid. It has none of that stodgy long-windedness in which the writers of books on social science seem to delight. The reader will also be grateful for the occasional gleams of humour and irony that enliven Dr Lowie's pages. They do not in the least detract from the book's level of high seriousness.

EDWARD SAPIR

GEORGE SANTAYANA

LITTLE ESSAYS. *Drawn from the writings of George Santayana by Logan Pearsall Smith. 12mo. 290 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York.*

THE title of this book, *Little Essays*, is in one respect just and descriptive: any one who has a taste for short essays will find a good feast provided for him; the promise of comprehensive and balanced thought is fulfilled, while for craftsmanship in diction and style, without which an essay is unworthy of its name, this author may take rank among our best writers. But in another respect the title is deceptive, and a reader may be surprised to find a complete system of philosophy sprung upon him, conveyed with a skill quite remarkable in literary art; for while the essays can well hold their own as detached disquisitions on special subjects, they form a catena of thought which hangs logically together, exposing a rational philosophy in a scheme so carefully contrived that even the necessary definitions of doubtful terms—imagination, reason, perception, and the like—are readily supplied without any appearance of machinery as soon as the reader begins to need them.

The book has, therefore, two claims, literary and philosophical; and, as it may be guessed from the preface that it was the literary element that first gave occasion for publication, so this will be perhaps the first to attract attention: for although the earlier philosophers of the English school were punctilious scribes and proud of their pens, and most of them masters in their manner, their tradition has been ill maintained so that, in spite of some brilliant exceptions, we are not now accustomed to look for even complacent dignity or severity of style in a philosophic treatise, much less to expect a prose which is delightful for its own sake. Indeed it has been said that George Santayana has imperilled the recognition of his philosophy by the fine robes in which he has consistently presented it; and that his readers have been distracted from the sincerity and depth of his purpose by the perpetual flow of his eloquence, his rich vocabulary, and the pleasant cadences

of his sentences, with their abounding imagery, incisive epigrams, and jovial humour. Epigram and humour are indeed dangerous tools; but how should an honest philosopher forgo humour? Humour, as it seems to me, is the natural courtesy which passes between our instinct and our reason. The conscious and subconscious mind are like two men of different nationalities who have long lodged together in the same house, and from not knowing each other's speech have been reduced to expressing their sympathy and goodwill by bowing and smiling to each other on the stairs. They mutually recognize that they understand the awkwardness of the situation, and they good-humouredly make the best of it: as our author somewhere says, "A well-bred instinct meets reason half-way"; and if it is anything like this, how can their own recognition of their own status be denied its place in an honest treatment of human life? Because it is playful perhaps or too amusing, and philosophic seriousness not feeling quite sure of its pretentious dignity can not venture near a joke. And it is true that, as there are occasions which forbid trifling, there are also thinkers so incapable of levity of any sort that they can not laugh without dishonouring themselves. William Cowper was as convinced of sin as St Paul was, and confessedly far more despondent of salvation than he; but if among the authentic remains of the Apostle's writings a ballad in the manner of John Gilpin had come down to us, what should we think of his Epistle to the Galatians? I have not detected Mr Santayana in abusing his humour: he exercises it chiefly when dealing with barbarism and vulgarity, or in exploding the fallacies (as he holds them to be) of those schools of thought to which he is essentially opposed, or, again, on those rare occasions when he relaxes to speak of himself. No one reading his account of Kant would wish that he had sheathed his satiric weapons, for on that topic he is quite as amusing as Heine. He does not feel kindly towards dialectical systems, and says somewhere that such philosophers do not proceed as honest searchers after truth would, but much rather like lawyers who labour to make the best of a case to which they are professionally committed. To me such philosophies have seemed like the schoolboy's definition of a net, "A lot of holes tied together with string." Whatever may be thought of Mr Santayana's meshes, it must be granted that his string is a fine silk. Here is an example:

"Since the ideal has this perpetual pertinence to mortal struggles, he who lives in the ideal and leaves it expressed in society or in art enjoys a double immortality. The eternal has absorbed him while he lived, and when he is dead his influence brings others to the same absorption, making them, through that ideal identity with the best in him, reincarnations and perennial seats of all in him which he could rationally hope to rescue from destruction. He can say, without any subterfuge or desire to delude himself, that he shall not wholly die; for he will have a better notion than the vulgar of what constitutes his being. By becoming the spectator and confessor of his own death and of universal mutation, he will have identified himself with what is spiritual in all spirits and masterful in all apprehension; and so conceiving himself, he may truly feel and know that he is eternal."

In reading this extract it requires some attention to dispel the impression that we are dealing with a platonist; indeed, for the manner and the vocabulary it might be a translation of some passage in the Socratic dialogues: but whatever inspiration the author may owe to Plato for his particular doctrine of ideas, he recognizes Spinoza and Democritus for his immediate masters, and his philosophy might perhaps be described as a building up of idealism—that is, the supremacy of the imagination—on a naturalistic or materialistic basis. Mr Santayana takes man as he "is known" to be from observation and experience, accepting all that is convincing in skepticism, and all that he deems proven in mechanical physics; and this may be called a basis of "common sense": and in thus renouncing what is termed "Epistemology" he incurs the reproach of materialism. How far he would himself accept and allow this description of his thought must be judged from his own statements in the fifth and last division of this book, which is entitled *On Materialism and Morals*. And materialism is a questionable label: if the word "matter" had changed its form as much as it has changed its connotation, not all the Grimms of Germany could ever have discovered laws enough to enable a philologist to identify it.

With this reliance on common sense the riddle of consciousness gives our author no trouble:

"Nothing is more natural than that animals should feel and think. The relation of mind to body, of reason to nature, seems to be actually this: when bodies have reached a certain complexity and vital equilibrium, a sense begins to inhabit them which is focussed upon the preservation of that body and on its reproduction. To separate things so closely bound together as are mind and body, reason and nature, is a violent and artificial divorce, and a man of judgment will instinctively discredit any philosophy in which it is decreed."

Reason, which follows consciousness upon the scene, harmonizes the various instincts and impulses, and establishes an ideal of good—that is, it corrects instinct by experience "with a view to attaining the greatest satisfaction of which our nature is capable." It is "essentially subsidiary," "in the service of a finite organization," and it becomes "the ultimate conscience."

There is, perhaps, the same difficulty in Santayana as in Spinoza of reconciling the religious attitude with the metaphysical or philosophical tenets. In both of them Christ is the wisdom of God and also merely a supreme offspring of human imagination: and for many a like notion the later philosopher seems to me to deserve from the papal Curia no better treatment than Spinoza got from the Synagogue. I have been confidentially informed that within the Roman Church (to which our author owes allegiance) such freedom of thought is allowed to its members, but not the promulgation of it. If there is still space for another name on the index *librorum expurgandorum*, I should judge that Professor Santayana has qualified for whatever distinction it may yet confer. I was myself much comforted in soul to see opinions so similar to my own so frankly advocated by a son of the Church; because since I edited the poems of Digby Dolben and Gerard Hopkins I have been assailed by the animadversions of Roman Catholic journals. "*Bridges était déjà très éloigné du Christianisme*," is a phrase which still echoes in my household. I was frightened to see my defenceless name pursued by such a thick arrowy flight of accents grave and acute; and that little amateur excommunication was but the best plum in a good pie. But I was perplexed when the other day an eminent English writer reproached me for being so blindly devoted to Christianity as to be unable to sympathize with other religions;

and he held up for my example my two great predecessors in office, Wordsworth and Tennyson, who (so he asserted) were not Christians, *très éloignés du Christianisme*; and this gentleman's view was, I take it, the same with that of another writer—whom I as highly esteem for his talent as I pity him for the misfortune he fell into when he contracted to write my "life" without even any acquaintance with its meagre materials—who described me, I believe, as a child of the English Prayer Book: while only the other day an American professor again upbraided me for my "incredible parochialism of outlook"; as if because a man would strain out a pope he must swallow a Reformed Church! I wittingly filch an inch or two of my allotted space in this Journal to make a public acknowledgement of gratitude to my mentors.

Of religion, about which there is much in these essays, Santayana has this eloquent vindication:

"There must needs be something humane and necessary in an influence that has become the most general sanction of virtue, the chief occasion for art and philosophy, and the source, perhaps, of the best human happiness."

His philosophical examination of Christianity is full, and he does not profess faith in its universal acceptance:

"The sciences are necessarily allies, but religions, like languages, are necessarily rivals. What religion a man shall have is a historical accident, quite as much as what language he shall speak. . . . The attempt to speak without speaking any particular language is not more hopeless than the attempt to have a religion that shall be no religion in particular. A courier's or a dragoman's speech. . . . So travellers from one religion to another, people who have lost their spiritual nationality, may often retain a neutral and confused residuum of belief, which they may egregiously regard as the essence of all religion, so little may they remember the graciousness and naturalness of that ancestral accent which a perfect religion should have."

In his essay on Protestantism he says many shrewd and some unexpected things of it:

"Protestantism has the unmistakable character of a genuine religion. . . . It is in correspondence with the actual ideals and instincts of the believer."

"It is a religion of pure spontaneity, of emotional freedom, deeply respecting itself, but scarcely deciphering its purposes. . . . It mistakes vitality, both in itself and in the universe, for spiritual life."

He seems to think its connection with Christianity to be accidental: it is a purely Teutonic product; and, as he never shrinks from his conclusions:

"This underlying Teutonic mood, which we must call Protestantism for lack of a better name, is anterior to Christianity and can survive it."

His contrast between the spirit of Protestantism and the spirit of the Gospel is uncompromising and as disconcerting as Mr Barlow's (that is, Mr Day's) harangue in Sandford and Merton: but when he speaks of the philosophy of modern Germany as a development, a very flower of Protestantism, we feel that he is assuming too summarily what the essence of these "ideas" really is, and we would disallow his major premiss. One might assert, *per contra*, that Protestant London in the nineteenth century was more essentially Christian than Catholic Rome was in the fifteenth; and are there not hundreds of thousands, nay, millions of Protestants in England and Germany, to say nothing of America, who have held, in the main, to the Gospel and to Christian life without danger of any taint from this Teutonic philosophy? Again, when he says that Protestantism nowadays "bids fair to apply itself to social life," may not that be an essential fruit of the Gospel? It is conceivable that time may yet show that these men—*très éloignés du Christianisme*, as he holds them to be, and its possible survivors—these very men were the carriers of it. *And when they would have thrust him down from the hill whereon their city was built, he escaped out of their hands.*

This essay ends with a brilliant dictum which sums up one aspect of the Reformation unforgettably:

"The symptoms have been cured and the disease driven in."

He does not fail to point out that Christianity was an Oriental "idea," and was not naturalized in Europe without a considerable dilution of paganism; and this because

"The Oriental mind has no middle. It oscillates between extremes, and passes directly from sense to mysticism and back again."

How well this expression illuminates our repugnance towards the forms in which Oriental art has figured the gods of Indian mythology! It is a good example of the pleasure which this author can give. Such dicta and aphorisms are on every page, and yet they never crowd:

"If pain could have cured us, we should long ago have been saved."

"That life is worth living is the most necessary of assumptions, and were it not assumed, the most impossible of conclusions."

To set such things together jostling in a row is to take the freshness out of them. They flow from the writer just where they have full force:

"Plasticity loves new moulds because it can fill them, but for a man of sluggish mind and bad manners there is no place like home."

For an example of his steady paces, a section from *The Knowledge of Character* may be taken. It gives incidentally his estimate of Rousseau:

"If Rousseau, for instance, after writing those *Confessions* in which candour and ignorance of self are equally conspicuous, had heard some intelligent friend like Hume draw up in a few words an account of their author's true and contemptible character, he would have been loud in protestations that no such ignoble characteristics existed in his eloquent consciousness; and they might not have existed there because his consciousness was a histrionic thing, and as imperfect an expression of his own nature as of man's.

When the mind is irrational no practical purpose is served by stopping to understand it, because such a mind is irrelevant to practice, and the principles that guide the man's practice can be as well understood by eliminating his mind together. So a wise governor ignores his subjects' religion or concerns himself only with its economic and temperamental aspects; if the real forces that control life are understood, the symbols that represent those forces in the mind may be disregarded. But such a government, like that of the British in India, is more practical than sympathetic. While wise men may endure it for the sake of their material interests, they will never love it for itself. There is nothing sweeter than to be sympathised with, while nothing requires a rarer intellectual heroism than willingness to see one's equation written out."

Sixty pages are devoted to Religion and forty-four to Art (that is, aesthetics or the fine arts) and Poetry; then follow sixty pages on Poets and Philosophers, in which religion again comes in for a good deal of handling: and its prominence in the book is the account of its prominence here.

A system of philosophy which sets out to establish a high spiritual ideal of life on the basis of the emotions will take its most persuasive support from the idea of beauty; whence the section on Art (that is, aesthetic) must be of primary importance. In the wider sense of the term we should say that Religion, Morals, and Aesthetics are, all of them, branches of Art—(it is to be wished that journalists would give over using the word Art for Painting; it is mere slang)—and though the Aristotelian supremacy of politics is acknowledged, there is in this book comparatively little discussion of its scientific branches; or I should say that my reading gave me the impression that social development was deferred in subordination to individual perfection.

The aesthetic section I shall represent by typical quotations, which will be better than any attempted summary: but I confess that this method is also the resource of despair, for the subject is overwhelming, and any one of these seventeen little essays would provide sufficient matter for a whole review: but I may venture a few remarks.

Morals, so Mr Santayana holds, requires only the harmony of each life, and that harmony is the same as happiness and wisdom.

Aesthetic has to be limited by prudence or utility in the interests of happiness: thus the fine arts are "superficial superadded activities."

Accordingly as this harmony is induced in a man he will clarify his ideals, and may even come to a vision of perfection. Such moments of inspiration are the source of "the arts," and a work of art is the monument of such a moment.

And here we are suddenly confronted by an essay entitled Stars. Why is this? It would seem that, the "ideal" having been resolved into a balance of relativities, it is necessary to look abroad for some more stable foundation, and it is asked whether the beauty of the starry heavens has not a sensuous character which is sublime in itself: and so the next essay is on Music, because music makes excursions into ultra-mundane regions, and reveals delicacies of feeling which in ordinary life are not isolated or perceived, and, in giving them definite form, may be said to create them, and thus, like the stars, proves that something "non-relative is very near the heart." It is possible that the selected essays are not wholly explicit at this point:

"That art is *prima facie* and in itself a good can not be doubted. It is a spontaneous activity, and that settles the question. In the actual disarray of human life and desire, wisdom consists in knowing what goods to sacrifice and what simples to pour into the supreme mixture. The extent to which aesthetic values are allowed to colour the resultant of highest good is a point of great theoretic importance not only for art but for general philosophy."

"Beauty gives men the best hint of ultimate good which their experience as yet can offer; and the most lauded geniuses have been poets, as if people felt that those seers, rather than men of action or thought, had lived ideally and known what was worth knowing. That such should be the case, if the fact be admitted, would indeed prove the rudimentary state of human civilization. The truly comprehensive life should be the statesman's."

"When we consider further the senseless rivalries, the vanities, the ignominy that reign in the "practical" world, how doubly blessed it becomes to find a sphere where limitation is an excellence, where diversity is a beauty, and where every man's ambition is consistent with every other man's and even favourable to it."

"Art supplies constantly to contemplation what nature seldom affords in concrete experience—the union of life and peace."

"The value of art lies in the making people happy."

"If Sybaris is so sad a name to the memory—and who is without some Sybaris of his own?—if the image of it is so tormenting and in the end so disgusting, this is not because we no longer think its marbles bright, its fountains cool, its athletes strong, or its roses fragrant; but because, mingled with all these supreme beauties there is the ubiquitous shade of Nemesis, the sense of a vacant will and a suicidal inhumanity. The intolerableness of this moral condition poisons the beauty which continues to be felt."

"Nothing but the good of life enters into the texture of the beautiful."

"No atheism is so terrible as the absence of an ultimate ideal, nor could any failure of power be more contrary to human nature than the failure of moral imagination, or more incompatible with healthy life. For we have faculties, and habits, and impulses. These are the basis of our demands. And these demands, although variable, constitute an ever-present intrinsic standard of value by which we feel and judge. The ideal is immanent in them; for the ideal means that environment in which our faculties would find their freest employment and their most congenial world."

Such sound and convincing teaching is much needed. Here are a few extracts from the essays on Literature:

"To turn events into ideas is the function of literature. . . . It looks at natural things with an incorrigibly dramatic eye, turning them into permanent unities (which they never are) and almost into persons, grouping them by their imaginative or moral affinities and retaining in them chiefly what is incidental to their being, namely, the part they may chance to play in man's adventures."

"It comes to clarify the real world, not to encumber it . . . it can not long forget, without forfeiting all dignity, that it serves a burdened and perplexed creature, a human animal struggling to persuade the universal Sphinx to propose a more intelligible riddle."

"Our logical thoughts dominate experience only as the parallels and meridians make a checker-board of the sea. They guide our

voyage without controlling the waves, which toss for ever in spite of our ability to ride over them to our chosen ends."

"To the art of working well a civilized race would add the art of playing well."

The next section of the book is on Poets and Philosophers, and to many readers it is likely to be the most attractive, for the estimates are plainspoken and very pointed with their exact diction and exultant humour. Admirers of Robert Browning will be disgusted; on the other hand, lovers of Dante should be satisfied, for he is set on a high pedestal. Mr Santayana thinks that Lucretius and Dante took the right view of a poet's function. Professor Royce once told me, when talking of the position of philosophy in America, that the function of a philosopher was so understood there that he found that he was expected "to emotionalize the district." It is Mr Santayana's opinion that it is the function of poetry to emotionalize philosophy; and that the great poem must be the aesthetical exposition of a complete theory of human life, so far as that is understood; and that there is therefore at present a finer opportunity for a great poet than the world has hitherto offered.

Since Dante's view of the situation is nowadays exploded, and indeed was already somewhat old-fashioned in his own day, it would follow—though Mr Santayana does not say so—that his poem must now be obsolete: but I could not think that I am less enthralled by his poetry than his first hearers were; I should say that its "its loveliness increases." And, again, *Paradise Lost*, when it was new, was admired for its justification of the ways of God to man, and yet the admiration of those first admirers is far transcended by our own, although we set by its argument as absurd, and love the poetry in spite of it—unless it should be true that the poetry gains by its romantic abstraction from the actual accidents of present conditions: whence I should conclude that poetry will use philosophy rather than be used by it. But such a poem as Mr Santayana desires and foretells, if ever it should be written, will necessarily be written by a great poet, and he will write good poetry.

From these subjects we pass to the final section of the book, headed *Materialism and Morals*, and whatever summary the author allows us of his system may be looked for here.

It would be presumptuous in me to attempt to criticize Professor

Santayana's philosophy, and my readers will probably rejoice with me that I can not undertake it; but I can avouch that his system justifies itself pragmatically as a vehicle for lucid discourse; and if things are to be judged, as he would have them, by their human values, this book should go far to accredit it: for the lucidity with which the spiritual interests of life are handled in these essays can not easily be rivalled: certainly I know of no other book in which there is so much teaching of things that English people need to learn, nor where the teaching is so genial, persuasive, and perspicuous, and so free from the flaws of fashionable prejudice and false sentiment. The philosophy, as I understand it, is very consonant with my own thought: there is no pretence of hiding the unsolved riddle of life. The Sphinx lurks in all systems; different schools only hustle her from pillar to post, and if she is to be driven into any corner where her presence is obvious, her best refuge is in the unsearchable atom. And this is an honest method than that of dismembering her and seeking to hide her mutilated fragments by dispersal, as a piano-tuner will distribute the error of his wolf all up and down the scale: for whatever immaterial agency there may be, or even should we come to be convinced that all ultimate agency was immaterial, our minds would be unable to conceive of its mode of action except in material terms.

I remember the story of a skipper, the old servant of a mercantile firm, who respected him as their most experienced and trustworthy agent. He was fond of horse exercise, and whenever he brought his ship into port, which happened very frequently in those days of short coal-storage, he would enjoy a day's riding, and charge the hire of his hack on the ship's bills. One day when he had presented his accounts before the Board some cheeseparers objected, and the chairman was constrained to remonstrate with the captain and explain that the Board regretted that they had no authority to supply him with mounts at the expense of the shareholders. The skipper bowed to their decision, and at their next interview was thanked and congratulated on his prompt attention to their instructions, "And we are glad to see, Captain Davidson, that the horse no longer appears in your accounts." "No, gentlemen," replied the skipper, "he no longer appears, but, though you mayn't see him, he's there."

ROBERT BRIDGES

BRIEFER MENTION

THE POWER OF A LIE, by Johan Bojer, translated by Jessie Muir (12mo, 311 pages; Moffat, Yard), grapples with human values, impulses, and emotions with clear vision, and welds them into a compact, significant narrative. Here is a novel of compelling power and dignity, illuminated by a bleak beauty like that of the aurora borealis. A tragedy, to which Hall Caine supplies comic relief by explaining—in his introduction—how much better he could have done it.

ATLANTIDA (L'Atlantide), by Pierre Benoit, translated by Mary C. Tongue and Mary Ross (12mo, 303 pages; Duffield), was proclaimed a best novel by the French Academy. It might, too, have been awarded a prize as a best satire. The narrative is somewhat Haggard: Antinea had probably read *She*. Benoit has learned from Anatole France to display erudition but the translators make a sad mess of it. What they do to classical names should be a warning to reformers of the curriculum. The title is the most glaring example. "Atlantida" means nothing. "L'Atlantide" means "The Atlantide" or "The Daughter of Atlas," which is sensible and has something to do with the story.

THE YOUNG PHYSICIAN, by Francis Brett Young (12mo, 520 pages; Dutton). Another English school-boy threading his self-conscious way through school, turning somewhat from type by entering medical school—which allows the book to attain a "big moment" in a pregnancy scene. "Well-written" as the expression is, but as provocative as a chart, as vivacious as a diagnosis, with the hilarity of a prescription.

HALF PORTIONS, by Edna Ferber (12mo, 315 pages; Doubleday Page), ripples through the channel cut by O. Henry, stirring that rich human sediment without unduly muddying the current. Miss Ferber's talents go to polishing the bright pebbles of life, rather than to touching the bedrock of reality, but there's no denying the world would be duller without an occasional pretty pebble.

THE GREAT AMERICAN STORIES, by William Dean Howells (12mo, 432 pages; Boni & Liveright), is probably as catholic a selection as any other editor would have made. All anthologies are desirable and all anthologies are disputable; this one should be welcomed on both counts. A nice adjustment of personal preferences to inevitable inclusions is here revealed, in a list which embraces Dreiser, Twain, Henry B. Fuller, and George Ade.

FLEUR-DE-LYS, by Wilfrid Thorley (12mo, 336 pages; Houghton Mifflin), is an earnest anthology of translated French poetry from the twelfth century to the beginning of the twentieth. The book has both critical and historical introductions, and notes on the individuals translated. As might be expected of any one with the courage to attempt so large a problem, Mr Thorley displays more earnestness than achievement. Also, the volume is marred by inverted word-order, conventionalized poetic diction, and the evident striving after rhymes.

JEWISH CHILDREN, by Shalom Aleichem (12mo, 280 pages; Knopf), is a collection of stories and sketches of child life in the Russian Pale—studies at once tentative and precocious, executed with a rare economy and a vivid understanding. Moods are evoked as if by the striking of a chord; the effect is instantaneous and sharp, yet softened with queer overtones of feeling.

REALISM, A Study in Art and Thought, by Arthur McDowall (12mo, 298 pages; Dutton). Resigned to the inevitable persistence of the term "realism" in the critical vocabulary of art, Mr McDowall devotes this long, earnest book to its definition. And at the end convinces us to our relief that the effective, potent critic of the future will line himself with the ranks of those who have still hope of its permanent suppression. Often the book is murky with the philosophical abstractions, crystallizing into dogma. He has the caution of the scholar, and not the audacity of the artist. He avoids the impertinences of brilliance, but also its decision. Flaubert, Dostoevsky, Zola, serve him of course in his query, but on the Georgians, whom he finds too much implicated in the perplexities of living, he exerts himself to his most relevant comment.

THE CHILDREN OF ODIN, by Padraic Colum (12mo, 282 pages; Illustrated; Macmillan), is the most gallant retelling of Norse mythology. The old Sagas and Nordic legends, scattered bit by bit through the poetry and drama of England and Germany, have been woven into a magic tale of Asgard and its gods. Willy Pogany's pictures of shaggy horses dashing across the sky, Iduna with her golden apples and the young Sigurd braving the flames, are excellent.

THE LITTLE SCHOOL, by Sturge Moore (12mo, 63 pages; Harcourt, Brace & Howe), is an extremely charming book of poems for children. They are poems about children for grown-ups too, and have a quiet lyricism and a lovely fantasy which the latter will be more apt to enjoy. The traditionalism which makes the author cling to inversions, forced and accented rhymes, and the like, adds a certain quality to the book which is here not amiss.

THE STORY OF DOCTOR DOLITTLE, by Hugh Lofting (Illus.; 12mo, 180 pages; Stokes), is the history of the peculiar home life of a lovable old doctor who likes animals better than he does the "best people," and his astonishing adventures in the high kingdom of the Jollijinki. An invigorating, fascinating tale, its quaintness enhanced by the droll illustrations, done by the author himself.

ELIZABETH, HER FOLKS, by Barbara Kay (8vo, 289 pages; Doubleday, Page), is a book for girls, recounting the visit of a rather snobbish young miss of fourteen to the home of her Cape Cod grandparents, and the salutary changes wrought in her character by her contact with them. **ELIZABETH, HER FRIENDS** (8vo, 237 pages; same author and publisher), relates further adventures of the same youthful heroine during a winter in New York. Excellent style and vigorous characterization place these books rather above the level of the average "juvenile." They are proof of the fact that a book for children need not seem to have been written by one.

In **A BOOK OF BOYHOODS** (12mo, 302 pages; Dutton). Eugénie M. Fryer avoids the twin curses of giving information without ideas and of spoiling great lives by making them intolerable to

the young. It is in essence a history of the imagination in the boyhoods of men so diverse as Leonardo, John Woolman, Nelson, James J. Hill, Pater, and MacDowell. To have written a book which will offend no healthy boy and make no boy feel priggish for reading it, is a good thing.

SCOTT BURTON ON THE RANGE, by Edward G. Cheyney (12mo, 303 pages; Appleton), follows the life of Scott Burton, Forester, in his efforts to prevent sheep smuggling into the National forests and to keep the U. S. Forest Service free from graft. It is an exciting and rather naïve tale, with the details of forestry and forest life neatly woven into the story and vouched for by the author's experience as a teacher of forestry.

LA FEMME ASSISE, par Guillaume Apollinaire (éditions de la Nouvelle Revue française). Apollinaire mort, les haines tombèrent comme par enchantement. Aujourd'hui au milieu de l'admiration générale paraît ce roman aussi divers et aussi faux que la vie. Un homme au carrefour du monde écoute mille rumeurs sans liens et les redit. Tout à coup des voix depuis longtemps oubliées remontent de la nuit des temps. Il n'y a pas de plan qui tienne, il faut qu'elles arrivent à nous. Ce livre est un enseignement libérateur pour l'esprit esclave de la froide composition depuis quarante ans à la mode. Avec lui la littérature se retrouve en plein-air.

LES CHAMPS MAGNETIQUES, par André Breton et Philippe Soupault. (Editions "Au Sans Pareil"). Le téléphone, le phonographe transmettent la parole, mais la machine à faire-les-poèmes crée mécaniquement la pensée. Le premier livre produit par cette surprenante invention, "*Les Champs magnétiques*", bouleverse la conception moderne de la poésie: il remet en honneur l'inspiration niée par les critiques et les poètes laborieux du dernier demi-siècle. Avec lui on commence véritablement à instruire les procès du langage et de la pensée. Avec lui l'image retrouve sa dignité, redevient le mode courant d'expression qu'elle était dans les langues primitives. Cent ans après les "*Méditations poétiques*", une nouvelle date marque dans la poésie française une étape nouvelle de l'exploration de l'esprit.

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

INTROIT

A grey musty presence inhabits the American concert-hall. It is a sort of melancholy enervating atmosphere filling the place, swagging from the ceiling like a rain-heavy cloud, clinging to walls, to balconies, to chairs. It lives on year after year, apparently too heavy to be lifted, too firmly established to be expelled. Trumpetings of ruddy brass, roaring of horns, hymns of joy, triumphal marches, conductors waving their arms, pianists smiting the "great black piano *appassionato*," thunderclaps of applause, all the seeming fire and movement and ecstasy of the season, do not diminish it. It is there before the lights are lit for the reception of the concert audience. And when the music ceases, and the audience departs, it remains, strong, undefeated. Even the closure of the concert hall during the summer months does not appear to affect it. For when the doors open again in the fall, and the season recommences, the first to enter the place find it there, heavier, denser, mustier than before, ready to overwhelm with its torpor all who venture into the cavern.

The dun presence is but the sign of the unnatural condition of the American concert-hall, the condition of a human organism existing in an environment with which it has no vital contact. It is the unreality of the place, its artificiality, its unresponsiveness to the needs of very life, become palpable. The vivid world that hurtles without the thin walls, the world in which men get their living, and breed and die, does not enter the place. There is no interpenetration of the concert-hall and the daily life, here in America. Men do not bring into the room their quotidian existences, and take Bach and Mozart out again with them into their affairs. The experiences had in the compelling floods of tone are separate, distinct utterly, from the experiences had beyond the walls. Music in America is a rich cloak men wear for a few hours each week, and then throw off again. The concert is brother to the Christianity of Sunday morning, to the "up-town" morality of New York City. The music-hall is that unnatural thing, a void. For only among men who believe in the supreme value of passion, is it anything else.

Only among men who seek to be guided by the promptings of their passion, and come to the great deposits of human passion that are the works of musical art, to relume their own, and refine and purify that which they know to be good, does it become a part of daily life. Only among men who seek, however bunglingly, to realize in their existences something of the clean fiery dreams of great artists, to carry the impulse received from art into action, and thus round the experience, does the healthy interpenetration of atmospheres take place.

And we poor Americans do not believe in passion. We here in the west have been born heirs, unwilling heirs, to a machine, a nice nicked shining machine, to which the passions are hostile. The passions hate mechanization. They clog the wheels, loosen the bolts. They wish to be free to re-invent, free to re-create. So we, who have identified ourselves with the machine, are afraid of the passions. If we do not quite see in them the enemy, the devil in the world, as did the Puritans, spiritual forbears of us all, out of whatever house we be, we nevertheless feel in them a useless and meddlesome force. They are bad for business, for they make men dissatisfied with business. But, since they spring to life incessantly in every bosom, since they crowd up and clamour for release without intermission, we have found it well to indulge them discreetly, patronizingly—in off hours. We have learned to toy with them, to flatter them, to prettify them, to parody them, to waste them in a myriad different fashions. We have even become in our search for methods of riddance, a fairly "musical" folk. We support great musical organizations, long musical seasons. For we have discovered that although music rekindles and refines the passion of men who believe in passion, it wastes and dampens the passion of those who do not believe in it. For it is innocent, and does not demand to know for what purpose it is being used. Like all strong stuff, it is capable of becoming a principle of evil as well as of good. It works for good only to "them that love God."

So in the concert-hall there has come to be the lugubrious, musty presence. It is the sign of the misuse of music, the deposit of all the emotion wasted there. It is the residue of vast floating masses of undirected, disinherited, bastard emotion. The passions of a thousand composers, misused, averted, undelivered, have gone to feed the torpid swagging cloud. The emanation of millions of hard, closed bodies, unused to passionate expression, and submitted

suddenly to the melting, limbering influence of music, has swollen it. Men have come in the evening to live for an instant what their world does not permit them to live out in it, and then gone again submissive into the world. Women have crowded here afternoon after afternoon, purchased a little solace, expressed for a hour what the world without will not let them express, then gone again to bondage, to hunger and emptiness. And the swagging cloud under the dome is evidence of all this pale sickly life. The walls, the columns, the seats, the stuffy smell, are evidence of it. The desire was not lovely even at the moment it was cast upon the air. It came forth ugly from having been denied so long, cowardly and feeble from having been beaten and repressed, feverish, sallow, without strength. But the fate that has met it, the rude denial that has greeted it the moment the music ceased, the desuetude in which it has been left to wander about aimlessly under the roof of the hall, have rendered it uglier even, greyer, more decadent.

But it is not alone the misused passion of the audiences that has gone to bloat the stifling presence. The musicians, too, have contributed to making the American concert-hall the place it is. The American's disbelief in his emotions has debauched the artists, too. For in order that he may give himself, a musician must believe, must know, that the emotion he is striving to communicate will be carried out into the world by the folk to whom he is addressing himself. It is life, the buildings, the people, that the violinist is trying to make vibrate when he draws his bow athwart the strings. Take away from him the hope of changing the face of the world by his labour, and you take away his ability to draw upon all his energies. And that is what America does to so many artists. That is why America is the ruin of so many of them. They feel, half-consciously only, perhaps, that they are operating in a void. But they feel the uselessness of their efforts. The grey presence descends on them, too, stifles them. And they begin to play half-heartedly, begin to substitute tricks for art, to cultivate the mannerisms that obtain with the passionless public, to prostitute themselves. Violinists make up programs upon which the cheapest, tawdriest pieces figure prominently. Conductors arrive from the other shore of the Atlantic, sell themselves, permit rich women to dictate to them their programs. But even into the playing of those who struggle against the atmosphere there creeps a deadness, a flatness. They, too, contribute to the smoke of stale feeling rising from the auditorium.

There are times when one would like, if one could, to close the concert-hall entirely and banish the musician crowned with roses beyond the frontier of the republic, so much has music helped rivet on us our bad old system. What, it appears, should pour out one of the great countercurrents to materialism, has itself been captured by materialism, and made its confederate. The place that should be a sort of pure high peak midmost the city, glad with light and rarest air, has been turned into a sort of spiritual opium-den, into which folk crawl to forget their defeat. And still, there are other times when one is glad that one can not, even if one would, destroy the concert-hall and banish the musician. For, without surcease, eternally fresh, there springs into the minds of those who love music the faith that in the battle for America, the flank of the enemy, if not his centre, can be driven back in the concert-hall. For if the machine has invaded the place, and helped entrench itself by means of the meretricious power of art, one finds oneself reasoning, why can not the process be reversed? Why can not the creative power of art war upon the machine as the machine has warred upon it, and conquer the machine? For if there is part of us all that says "yea" to our form of civilization, there is another, weak as yet, but growing stronger all the while, that says "no." And why should not that portion of us become self-conscious and self-assured through art, through music, and begin to dominate the other as once it was dominated? Could not the artist, together with his ally the social reformer, destroy the machine and create life anew? Could not Mozart triumph over Rockefeller, as Rockefeller, or the form of soul symbolized by him, has hitherto triumphed over Mozart?

It is this dream that justifies the criticism of music, and emboldens the critic to his task. For it makes him hope that, in devoting himself to the problems of the musical world, he is seizing hold not on narrowly technical problems, but on the problem of life in America itself. It makes him feel that in seeking to draw attention ceaselessly to the vital impulse of music, to the direction of compositions, to the will of the composers; in warring to the best of his ability on those musicians who submit without struggling to the desires of the American crowd; in calling out thanks to the men who are fighting for the integrity of their art, he is battling for the life of the republic itself. It makes him know that the greatest rewards await him, that can he but help dispel the grey devastating pres-

ence that hangs over the concert room, and make it indeed the place of refreshment and consecration which it should be, the battle will be won, the world without the walls be reformed and purified. And a worthier fight no man can ask for.

PAUL ROSENFELD

THE SHOW

MECCA is surely a three-ring show, especially the *bacchanale*: "the Imperial Morris Gest". . . "the man who dreamed and produced it, whose theatre instincts, whose passion for color and movement, whose boundless ambition, whose curious genius . . ." (I quote from The New York Times) Mr Gest may always be depended upon to do one well. One was glad of his appearance—albeit somewhat tumbled—before the curtain. What the large gentleman with the bland voice called "Mr Gest's dear public" was relieved to hear that a cable had already conveyed to Mr Oscar Asche the important news of how "a world's *première*" had "sped." One of what the same bland gentleman with the soft dress-shirt called "these exquisite young American girls" really did take the eye. She and her assorted *entourage* floated down and up the rather complicated looking stairway like old hands. But them, if not her, one suspected of having grown up in a more Spartan pre-escalator period. Miss Hannah Toback as Zummurud was too soppy *in-génue* to keep up her end of what, at least in costumes and curtain, aimed at the exotic. But Mr Lionel Braham as her old dad overcame all comers. The Chinks, the goats, the camels, and the pick-aninnies were very much too good. The music, if a bit English, was nevertheless serviceable and, on the whole, kept its place. Mr Gest, to everybody's disappointment, gave us one novelty—a slave-market with no even would-be beautiful slaves, Greek or otherwise. Perhaps this event may be taken to signalize the closing of the Hiram Powers period in American Art.

Mr Tappé was observed among the auspicious audience whence he himself observed upon the stage several good openings for his own slick Art.

S. T.

THE THEATRE

WHEN Mallarmée wrote, "*La chair est triste, hélas, et j'ai lu tous les livres*," he hardly meant that reading even all the books was the cause of his *tristesse*. But if the line had read, "*et j'ai vu toutes les pièces*" how well one could have understood him! Not that unaided one can see them all; nor that unguided one can bear seeing even many. It is not a good season.

NOW THE TAVERN which Mr Cohan made over from melodrama and left a melodrama devouring itself with parody might just have saved the day. For this is precisely the sort of thing Mr Cohan does enormously well. He did it in SEVEN KEYS, he has done it in at least one private playlet. He is so much of the theatre that he can satirize himself and leave the result most agreeably theatrical. THE TAVERN just fails to come off not because its intentions fail of consistency, but because the production is inconsistent.

THE master producers, by worshipful consent in New York, are the members of the Theatre Guild and it is always very hard to say that they haven't quite pulled it off. It is even a bit disrespectful to use the phrase, and yet the Guild isn't so exclusively preoccupied with art as to justify a special vocabulary. THE TREASURE was a difficult piece for an American producer to put on. It was written in Yiddish for Jewish audiences, and to a Jewish audience the appearance of a crowd of typical Jews is no more disturbing than the appearance of twenty typical Frenchmen to a Parisian audience. The Yiddish theatre in America has usually the fault of presenting types instead of characters; but a hardened audience can use its imagination and make characters out of the types. The Guild production erred in doing exactly what the Yiddish theatre can do successfully. Played in English, played with the intention of exposing the human qualities and the artistic niceness of Mr Pinski's work, The Treasure fell short because of the touching fidelity of the producers to the idea of typical Jewishness.

It is a serious error and since the Guild always can count on a

harmony of tone, since the actors always understand the atmosphere of production, it invalidates criticism of any of the individuals. Suppose they all were perfect types—which they weren't. That is what they were foredoomed to try to be. Even Fred Eric's Judke (the half-wit son of the house) can win no special praise for being essentially human and not essentially racial. As production *THE TREASURE* simply dissatisfies.

But as play it is delightful. An irony not at all desolate and a baldness of humour which Anglo-Saxons find rather disquieting, are set in an exciting framework of comedy. The pace and direction of the play were excellent; Mr Simonson's settings, especially the graveyard, were very good. The courage of the Guild in producing a comedy, after all these tears, is noble.

I do not know what madness occasionally sweeps over the critical world in New York and, sharing in it at times, no doubt, I feel a certain delicacy about it. But it must be said, in all fairness, that the talents of Mr O. P. Heggie are not only foresworn and trampled upon in *HAPPY-GO-LUCKY*; they are quite insufficient to take that play out of the rut. A nice comedy, for sure. But dull. Far too dull when you remember that a whole lower middle class English family walks its boards. The crowds have kept away from this play not because it is too subtle, too lovely, or too dear. They have kept away because it is not entertaining enough. The producer, Mr A. H. Woods for whom I have an enormous respect, implies that if they will not come, he must give them what they want. That argument applied to *TOO MANY HUSBANDS* last season would have been reasonable. What has happened to *HAPPY-GO-LUCKY* is that two classes of audiences have kept away. Those who dislike stupidity when it is vulgar and those who despise stupidity when it isn't.

THE first act of *THE MIRAGE* which opened the luxurious Times Square Theatre quite overcame your reporter. It was like a fire and there was almost as big a crowd. But the fumes were too much. The heroine of *THE EASIEST WAY* did not (as a notable New York critic made her out) commit suicide. But then, she didn't have to play in *THE MIRAGE*

GILBERT SELDES

COMMENT

THERE ought, at least, not to be any uncertainty about children's books. A whole week of November will be devoted to them, and since the week is adequately removed from the triumph of politics, it ought to do some good. Hesitation can only be between the ideal of letting children read no books at all, toward which we have a distinct leaning, and letting them read everything which their elders find interesting. Ourselves having read *A Flatiron* for a Farthing at the tender age of twenty-four we have no fears about recommending it to our young readers, and if we could only persuade the little ones who ask us for guidance to read *Alice* or *Edward Lear* we should really feel very proud and uplifting.

A strong radical tendency exhibits itself in our young. They are suspicious of the books handed down and they are, we understand, becoming critical of the new books written for them. In the latter respect they certainly differ from the rest of the reading public. Yet that is not their only claim to blessedness. They very seldom read long reviews of books and they hear virtually no poets reading from their own works. Their sophistication is, at least, natural.

Possibly there will be some confusion in the future between books for and books by children. It is a pity but it shows one thing clearly enough. No child's book of the past two years has been fit for children to read. So if children write for their elders, we have the quite equal privilege of writing for them.

WE have been informed, on veracious authority, that a certain cartoon of a very dear gentleman in the June issue of this magazine was, from the plush chairs of Cambridge, Massachusetts, looked upon as "unkind." Neither the artist nor the editor had any other than kindly feelings for the subject of the drawing, each of them having experienced, the one as a visitor to Harvard University, the other as an undergraduate, the very genuine sweetness of Dean Briggs. The question whether this caricature, as is the essence of all caricatures, exaggerated some features at the expense of others and whether the result was something expressive of a character

considerably different from that of Dean Briggs was, aesthetically speaking, neither here nor there. The only man who really cares a pin for art is the man who intuitively and immediately takes a work of art for what it is. That is to say, he is no more inclined to check up the details of a picture to see whether they jibe with the original than is a man whose being is swung by Shakespeare's genius likely to be influenced in his judgement of Antony and Cleopatra by any mere historical fact. People of unhealthily refined skins might indeed feel pain that the physiognomy of their friend when brought into contact with the imaginative subconscious of an artist should, for reasons too delicate and subtle ever to be thoroughly understood, occasion so savagely unkind a likeness. But that even these unhappily constituted individuals should hold this fact against the artist would be—had we not lived to learn—unbelievable. One suspects in their case, as in that of most people who preen themselves upon their sensitivity, that this groomed appanage is only skin-deep, that, in a word, they suffer less from any peculiar delicacy of organism than from the absence of such vital fire as in other men responds wholeheartedly to the challenge of form in art, of emergency in practical life. Nietzsche may have been exorcizing his own shadow when he wrote *Beyond Good and Evil*, but surely some things—and art and science are among them—have their being *Beyond Kind and Unkind*.

Of course there are still extant in this world some of us who do not condemn even conscious malice, so that it be but sharp and salty to the taste. We can more readily put up with the saliently unkind *Harvey's Weekly* than with the kindly tap-water of *The New York Times*. We respect and can be amused at the wry faces of Senator Lodge, but at the imbecile mouthings and posturings of his mare our stomachs finally turn. On the race-track Governor Cox is at least his own driver. Here among the stars—baseball and otherwise—we swallow pretty much what our colleges and our newspapers and our conventions hand out. But one of these days we are going to bite off a longer and a softer stick of soap than we can chew. That may be for American art and letters a good thing. On the day (should it ever dawn) when this American people wakes up to the full bland horror of that Ohio soap, Professor Brander Matthews will do well to wrap the drapery of his couch about him, and lie down to pleasant dreams.

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